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TRUE CELESTIALS

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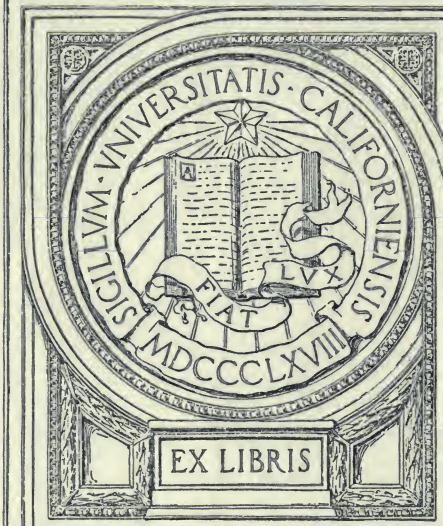
CHINESE SKETCH BOOK

GIFT OF
PROFESSOR C. A. KOFOID



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TRUE CELESTIALS

OR

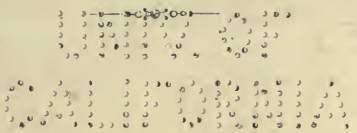
Leaves from a Chinese Sketch-Book

BY

REV. J. SADLER, AMOY

ASSISTED BY

REV. W. H. MUNCASTER, M.A., B.D., BECCLES



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GIFT OF
PROFESSOR C. A. KOFOID

Dedication

TO

THE REV. PROFESSOR AND MRS ARMITAGE

AND OTHER HONOURED FRIENDS WHO HAVE ENCOURAGED THE INTRODUCTION OF OUR DEAR CHINESE BRETHREN TO THE WORLD

This Book

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

TO WHOM
ARMITAGE

PREFACE.

It will be found, as a rule, that in proportion as European Christians are brought into personal contact with Chinese, and are concerned for their welfare as Elisha was for the dead child over whom he agonised, there gradually grows up a passion for the salvation of the people, which increases as time goes on, and becomes soul-consuming.

Want of such personal contact leaves a want of general interest in China, such as is observable in some directions in England.

In the following pages effort is made to reproduce impressions which, to a China Missionary, are amongst the most precious treasures of life, showing what has been done and what may be done for bringing the greatest heathen nation to the Saviour.

An awakening shock was given to the British public at the time of the Indian Mutiny when it was discovered that native Christians were the best friends of enlightenment and progress; so in the coming changes involved

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in the "Chinese question" it will be proved that the Christianisation of China has bearings on the world at large.

The world empire of Britain is being formed in all parts of the globe, and its colossal greatness is supported by majesty, power, learning, and wealth; but there is a kingdom of One, called the Son of Man, whose progress is marked by pity for the world's woe, and salvation from the world's sin. The day comes, and is now at hand, when the manifestations of this kingdom shall become so important, that without its moral energy the most stately empire will fail, and share the fate of those that have already perished through sin.

We are indebted to the Religious Tract Society for being able to insert views of Niatau, Shooting the Rapids, and a Chinese Pagoda; and to the London Missionary Society for the rest of the pictures.

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TRUE CELESTIALS.

CHAPTER I.

Impending Social and Moral Changes in China.

SOME say there neither have been nor can be changes in China. This is to ignore History. The mightiest changes have taken place, only they have been effected in quietness, and have been unknown to the outside world. Let the growth of the country be studied, in population, in the founding of cities, in the forms of civilised life,—legislative, judicial, mercantile, literary; let the influence of this greatest heathen power on surrounding countries be looked at, and it will be seen that marvellous changes and developments *have* taken place. "Yes, but," it is said, "all this belongs to the forgotten past; stagnation has set in for hundreds, if not thousands of years! Any effort made by St Thomas or the early Nestorians was soon lost sight of. The Polos were but adventurers in the Mongul Court, and left no trace of good." Be it so; but is there no lesson from the introduction of Buddhism, a completely foreign religion, brought even from a people of colour, the Hindoos, against whom the Chinese have particular

aversion? Is there no lesson from the mighty Taiping movement, which shook the Empire to the centre, in trying to turn out the Manchu rulers? Specially have we to consider the extraordinary changes which have taken place during the last few years, only about a generation, by China being brought into contact with Western powers; and this through the influence of our own country in chief. Is it a small change that political relations are now established with all the great Christian nations, whose diplomatists are living at Peking, while the Chinese ambassadors, such as the late esteemed Marquis Tseng, are found in Western courts? Is it a small change that educational relations with the West are more and more being formed, that Western science is made a part of the imperial examinations, that a college for Western learning is established at Peking, that foreign newspapers and books are being read and studied? Is it no change to find that when you go to China you see a native merchants' steamship company, that the telegraph is erected between the great cities of the Empire so vastly distant from each other, that there are government arsenals on the Western plan, that there is a commencement of mining, instead of the old method of dragging out minerals in basketfuls from holes in the mountains? Is it nothing of change that the Imperial Maritime Customs Offices are filled by foreigners, and that there is a commencement of steam factories and railways?

"Yes," it may be said, "but these are only changes on the surface. The real life of the people is neither touched nor influenced."

Now it may be truly admitted that if no indication of any deeper change was to be found there would be small reason for congratulation. The real difficulty of the country is *moral*,—the want of principle and purity in each department of life. But this is exactly the point where the work of Christian Missions comes in. As our country was the means of opening China to the West, so our London Missionary Society was the means of commencing the work of Protestant Missions. In connection

with all the Christian workers who have followed, an army of thirty thousand church members has been gathered, to say nothing of a much greater number who only wait for encouragement in order to avow themselves.

What are these amongst so many? Yes, but they can be, and must be, multiplied. Be it understood that, populous as is China, the leaders of the country are but few. A new class of enlightened reformers are really rising up in connection with our Missions. Those who are worthy, the good remnant, are being called out. The greatest results may be expected, and we see how wonderful are the conditions for future changes all along the line. A recent visitor writes thus:—"The missionaries have entered China with a passion more absorbing than the greed of gain, with an intensity more undying than the thirst for knowledge, with a love more consuming than the hunger for revenge. They have gone there to stay. They are there to live or to die, that China may know the blessings of that Gospel which has brought comfort and joy to their own hearts, and inspired them with confidence in life and the hope of triumph in death." Now it is not wonderful that a strong faith in God and man should lead to the expectation of great developments from such beginnings?

It seems to me but natural to expect that Western healing should make wonderful strides, and that the new medical movement for lady doctors should be particularly successful. The Medical Mission in Edinburgh is arranging to train female as well as male students, at half the cost now being paid in London.

It may here be said that our movements to improve the condition of women from their birth upwards promise to be successful. Thus infanticide, the common hawking of children, the evils of early bethrothals, domestic slavery, polygamy, female education and employments, are all dealt with as matters of great importance in our work, and the Chinese Christians are encouraged to push on all such moral and social changes on their own lines.

If the converts are few compared with the mass of heathen, yet they are a leaven. They are situated as little Christian communities in a vast extent of centres. They are watched over and helped in all ways by the foreign missionaries. Their own native ministers are every year becoming more and more proficient. These Christian communities are brought into contact with all that is good in the West.

Here I come to a point which deeply concerns the permanence of Christian Missions in China, and on which therefore I may be excused for dwelling at some length. The fact that the converts are connected with the West in their deepest life causes friction with their Oriental friends. We remember how Israel in Egypt was protected at first, and exposed afterwards to terrible persecution; and so with the early Christians in Rome.

There is reason to fear lest a similar experience should come to the Chinese Christians. I have known how one of their native leaders has looked forward to the struggle necessarily impending as soon as the present progress of Christianity becomes too great to avoid the conflict which happens in a revolution of faith. All along we have had difficulty, and in time of crisis a native pastor has come to us in sore distress, wondering how things would end. As the struggle intensifies it may be modified through the influence of Western Christendom. This, however, remains to be seen.

It is well for us to distinctly remind ourselves of the fact that, so bad is the government of Eastern countries, that Europeans are not able to live except by the authority of what is called extra-territoriality, which means that when we go to China we are under the protection and control of our own Government representatives, consuls, and ambassador, and not subject to the Chinese Government, because of its intolerable treachery, examination in case of lawsuit by torture, reckless imprisonment, terrible corruption, and tendency even to trifle with the rights of life and death. The liberty granted to us by treaty is thus expressed in diplomatic language: "The Christian religion, as professed by Protestants and Roman Catholics, inculcates the

practice of virtue, and teaches man to do as he would be done by; persons teaching it or professing it therefore shall alike be entitled to the protection of the Chinese authorities, nor shall any such, peaceably pursuing their calling and not offending against the laws, be persecuted or interfered with."

In an excellent paper on the forward movement by Dr Wright, Bible Society, in the *Contemporary Review* for October, it is well said, "This is the Magna Charta of the missionaries and their converts. It has proved an incalculable blessing to the native Christians, and though no treaty rights in China can secure them from unjust social burdens, they may appeal to it in cases of religious persecution, as Paul sought the protection of the Roman law. To the missionary it is an instrument of supreme importance. He believes in the God of Providence, as well as in the God of Grace, and as he is a father to his converts, he cannot see with indifference his children persecuted for believing what he has urged them to believe. Under these circumstances the united missionaries have made a forward movement."

The treaty arrangement between the powers makes revision possible on the demand of either side; and in the opinion of some there is a tendency about every ten years to review the treaty provisions. A question has arisen, Will the toleration clause above referred to be permanent? Some say the clause is unimportant. They regard the Chinese as more enlightened than formerly on the question of religious liberty; favourably inclined to continue in the spirit of the treaty, without its formal sanctions; ready with their proclamations of protection; and in sympathy with the advanced notions of the West. Others refer with anxiety to the fact that there is reason for suspicion. It is certain that some years ago an attempt was made by the Chinese rulers to put missionary operations so much under the control of the mandarins as that mission work, humanly speaking, would be imperilled. Therefore an earnest effort was made by leading missionaries to represent the facts of the case to the highest home authorities of Great Britain. The

result was the sending of a despatch to China, which embodied the views represented. This despatch had full weight with the Chinese Government, and therefore the liberty which missionaries have shared was not interfered with. But a despatch alone is not sufficient for a permanent settlement of the difficulty, and it is a grave question whether British Christians can afford to be indifferent in such a matter. Contact between different races is a matter of extreme delicacy at the best. Let it be remembered what England is to Ireland, Germany to France, and Russia to the Jews. How to make any change that shall not be for the worse is often a serious problem. Japan, naturally enough, wants to cast off the yoke of extra-territoriality, and to control Europeans, just as Britain controls Japanese who come to this country. The same feeling will grow in China, and we must own to some sympathy with it. But then see the difference between Western and Eastern governments. Think of the law and order which regulate our industries, the administration of justice, and legislation. *One thing is sure, that neither we nor our converts can be said to have anything like a formal protectorate, giving room to disregard the interests of the Chinese in general.* We assimilate in all that is good. Our interests go together. *In any case of friction between Christians and heathen our teaching is, "Receive, rather than do, wrong."* We have to show the passive graces of Christianity, that Christ's kingdom is not of this world, and that therefore we only wish for liberty to live and work. Even the Chinese authorities are often brought into terrible straits by the conduct of their own mandarins. Witness the consternation felt because of the corruption and neglect shown by officials in connection with the frequent and great floods and famines. Benevolent foreigners have felt compelled to discontinue their help in times of such distress, because the money contributed for such purposes has found its way into the pockets of local authorities, who could leave the people to starve. Such a state of things is simply anarchic; to say nothing of the terrible conservatism which can manage to

ignore instructions from even the highest source on behalf of public improvements.

If the time comes for the revision of the treaty, it is possible that it may be proposed to make an important distinction between traders and missionaries. The authority of the treaty was not at first given to missionaries. History records that it resulted from a representation made to Lord Elgin by the Shanghai missionaries. According to information I received from early records in Hong-Kong, religious liberty was not thought of in the first instance, only liberty to trade. We know how, in the earliest history of our dealings with India, there was a positive jealousy against any operations of missionaries; and it has taken some years before it is properly understood that the converts are the best friends of the Empire, and that, in fact, missionary life and work are an influence in India more important even than legislation. Our position in China is not yet so happy; and it appears that in the outset French Roman Catholics were ahead of us in securing religious liberty. After it was once secured by one foreign power, it was easily obtainable by the rest. There is another reason for thinking that possibly less care may be had in the treaty bearing on *religious* liberty, viz., that once or twice in the history of later years a distinction has been made between missionaries and traders, to the detriment of the former. The position is simply this: the ideal Chinaman is bound to be conservative. From his point of view there is as much against the admission of outsiders as there was to the early Britons against the admission of the Romans. So long as he is influenced by this spirit he may be tempted to take any steps against Europeans. But when he sees that there is an affected indifference to Christian missionaries, he will the more try to oust them by way of commencing the expulsion of all foreigners.

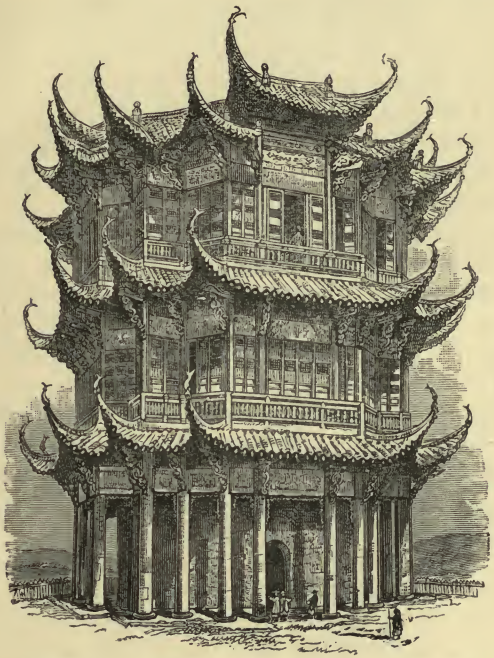
There is another consideration which should not be forgotten. Before there were any complications of trade, missionaries made their way in China without any treaty; and so long as they were wise in adapting themselves to circumstances, they were

allowed to remain. It was only when the Pope was brought into conflict with the Emperor on the question of ancestor worship that trouble arose. As things are now, the interests of all Europeans of whatever class are on the same footing. The passport which gives me liberty to travel about China is the same in form as is used for traders ; in fact, it was evidently got up for the latter, and simply used, without too much adaptation, for missionaries.

Now, in this combination of interests, care is even needed that secular interests do not swamp the spiritual. Look at the Taiping movement. It began in religious feeling. Had it received sufficient enlightenment and guidance it might have proved a valuable national movement. It failed, however, in these particulars, and therefore it came to nought ; or rather it was put down by British force, called in by the Chinese in their extremity, especially because our traders and diplomatists were anxious to have a central government with which they could carry on their concerns. But this great authority that we have in the councils of different nations brings an enormous responsibility. Some believe that our interference was not justifiable, that the Chinese should have worked out their own national problems, and that if they had done so the regeneration of China might by this time have far advanced. Some watchful care ought to be exercised, so that, in case of another national movement, we might prove helpful in every way, *i.e.*, both by giving more enlightenment, and by not interfering to stop the development of national progress.

There is one other point of view. The British people, from their very wonderful position of liberty, have an unquenchable resentment to the paternal government which exists, not only, say, in Oriental lands, but even to a considerable extent in Continental nations. Take the present important question of Madagascar and the French protectorate. Men of extreme views maintain that it will not be possible eventually for British missionaries to remain on the island. Others, looking more searchingly and guardedly into

the whole question, maintain that according to probabilities, *Continental* missionaries, accustomed to paternal government, will adapt themselves so as to be able to live in harmony with French institutions; while, on the contrary, the danger will be that Britishers, from their very ideas of liberty, and, shall we



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say, the combativeness inherent in the British nature, will have more difficulty. It will be said, Cannot this be arranged in the spirit of the Gospel? Possibly. But such arrangement will be wonderfully helped forward if the constituents of missionary societies become so acquainted with the facts of the case as not to take up an impossible position, either on the side of the Church or the State. The matter anyhow is critical.

As to China, we are bound to consider that as the East is far from the West, so are the institutions of Oriental lands different from those of England. It has been the effort of some missionaries to suffer all things in order to see Christianity becoming a *native* institution. And yet a revolution in faith and morals must mean some trouble through the changes in habit and custom. We do not wish to make the Chinese English in any sense except in a sense of righteousness. But suppose a religion were spreading in England which upset nearly all our habits and customs, it is difficult to see how all friction could be avoided. As a matter of fact, we live in a mixed world, and complications will occur. There is the greater need of wisdom.

In view of the perilous and persecuted life of Christians, one of the most thoughtful Chinamen I have known put himself to toil and expense in order to explain to influential people of the West the nature of the difficulties of converts, so as to win sympathy for them. His simple faith as a Christian, and his view of the love of fair-play in the Christian British character, led him to think that the ear and heart of the great British public might be gained, and so not less, but more, might be done for the kingdom of Christ, if only the influential persons going from this country to China as traders or diplomatists would in every way open to them witness for God. He maintains that moral suasion might be so exercised as to let it be understood that Christianity is both good and lawful, a fact this, which vast multitudes of Chinese do not comprehend; and therefore, seeing they live in a country whose rulers are supposed to dictate the faith to be received, it comes to pass that the religion so much needed even for the spread of honesty has less *human* help towards success than the gross superstitions of the country. The conclusion is this, we have wonderful openings and many adversaries. Now, as in the time of Paul, we may be honoured to-day and stoned to-morrow. At least, it is well to know the facts of the case, and to exercise ourselves in prayer and effort accordingly. The battle of Arma-

geddon is being fought in China. Changes, great though quiet and often unseen, must occur. May we be of those who understand the times, and know what Israel ought to do! To say the least, whenever the revision of the treaty with China comes before Parliament, do not let us lightly give up the toleration clause which actually *exists*, and has such an important place in the history of Christian missions.

CHAPTER II.

Reminiscences of Mr Ahok.

" REMARKABLE convert has come to the front at Fuchow.

"His way was not open to be received into membership with the Methodist Episcopal Mission, in whose chapel he worships, but he has been baptized in our own mission at Hong-Kong. He has had a difficulty in keeping the Sabbath, but after instruction and persuasion has determined to do so, though at considerable risk to his business. He has come forward most handsomely in educational work, and advanced ten thousand dollars for an Anglo-Chinese College in connection with the Methodist Mission."

These words were spoken by a colleague to me when I returned to China in 1882, and so I gained my first information of Mr Ahok. Some time after this, on a Sunday morning, when I was preaching at our oldest church in Amoy, he was present at the service, having come from Fuchow on matters of business and friendship. At the close of the service he was introduced to me. Evidently his fellow-townsmen were proud of him, and of the position to which he had risen. His appearance was imposing, as his height and size were above the common; and he possessed a great fund of energy. He seemed pleased when I invited him to go home with me, and entered heartily into conversation on Christian experience and work while we threaded our way through the crowded streets, and

in crossing the Port. He had been taught English by a Scotch lady, in whose family he had lived as a servant; and had kept up and increased the knowledge to a considerable extent, though it was easier for me to talk with him in his native tongue. He was glad to go to our English service, which we hold for the benefit of foreigners on a Sunday, and which is conducted by missionaries in turn when their work allows them to be in Amoy.

"I will aid you to the extent of a thousand dollars, or about £200, to start a Chinese school. At all events, Mr Chhun and I will in the meantime give four hundred dollars (two hundred each) to start a middle school. I will give fifty dollars for furnishing the chapel at Loh-iu."

These utterances were the outcome of earnest and protracted conversations, in which he was pressed to do for Amoy, his native city, some such good service as he had done for Fuchow, the city of his adoption; and to take advantage of excellent opportunities for pushing on mission work in different directions.

I was glad to notice that through mingling with foreigners he was getting interested in the Western modes of living, cleanliness, and other desirable habits. During his stay he returned from Amoy one day to Kulangsu, after visiting his relatives, exclaiming, "Oh, I am so sick and tired of the dirt and vermin in the houses of our people; even the pigs are allowed to enter one part of the house. Do let me use your bath." He had his servant in attendance to supply him with clean changes of clothes. In this way he formed a striking contrast to Chinese gentlemen in general, even honorary mandarins, to which class he had risen.

"Be polite." This was a continual advice given by our friend to inferiors, and sometimes even to an equal. He was anxious to combine Chinese and English modes of etiquette, and carried the thing to such an extent that one day a witty listener exclaimed, "Yes, heaven and earth shall pass away, but politeness shall not pass away." The Chinese rules of etiquette

are very far-reaching, including many graces of disposition. Our friend however had a difficult, and some said impossible task in seeking to effect the combination. Some of the captains on English steamers were slow in meeting him on equal terms and in giving him the respect he deserved, through their British contempt for the Chinamen. When staying in the house of a foreigner, not understanding their ways sufficiently, he would invite his Chinese friends, and fill his host's house, keeping up a constant succession of visitors.

It was with him a matter of conscience to study sociability. He would not think it out of order to request a wealthy Chinese friend to prepare a feast, to which he might invite several foreign guests. Chinamen understand how to make up to each other for such kindnesses. A serious question arises whether missionaries pay sufficient attention to these matters of sociability among the Chinese. One day Mr Ahok brought a rich Formosa merchant to my house, saying he was not comfortable among his relatives, and it was desirable for me to give him two rooms. This was not a strange request from a Chinese point of view. Missionaries have been similarly accommodated in native houses. Unhappily, several things kept me from responding to our friend's wish, one in particular, viz., that it did not seem right to take time and strength from regular duties. To Mr Ahok it seemed we had lost a good opportunity of being serviceable to the mission as well as to the Chinaman himself. He argued thus: "This man is a millionaire; it would be well to take time over him, and show him attention, because of the good he would do in spreading Christianity if he became a convert." In China it is the usual practice to act from motives of policy, and it will take time before disinterested benevolence becomes such a powerful influence as in Christian lands.

No one, however, could study the life of Mr Ahok without meeting with many instances of self-sacrificing effort for the good of others. Even if his methods were not always thought to be the best, yet no one could fail to rejoice in the labours he put forth on behalf of great public ends. "In the time of the

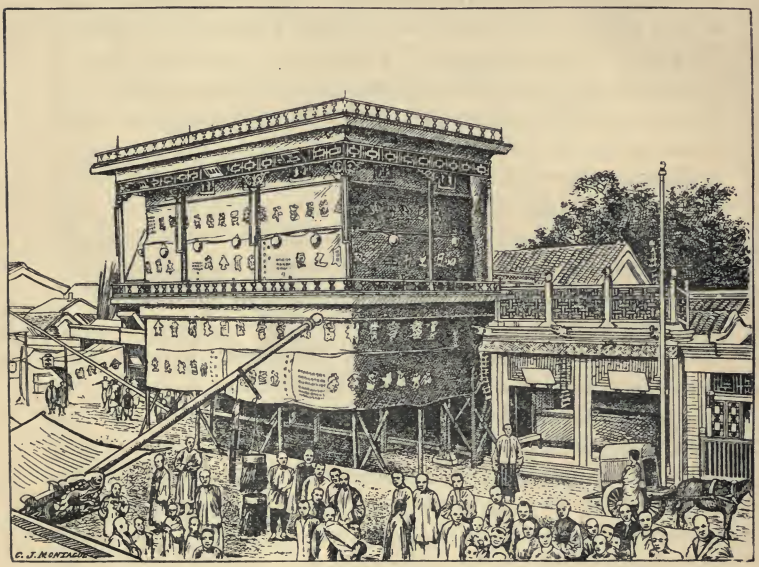
Franco-Chinese War there were a number of wounded soldiers at Foochow; we were very glad to admit them to our hospital, irrespective of nationality." These words were uttered to me by Mr Ahok, and showed the generous cosmopolitan spirit that animated him. His mind was enlarged by visiting many parts of China and Japan, and by being brought into contact with men from different countries of the West. It seemed to be natural to him to love everybody. He once wrote me that he had started a Christian inn in Hong-Kong, so that friends, Chinese or foreign, passing to and fro, who might not be able to avail themselves of the expensive hotels in the place, could be accommodated. He put it under the charge of the senior missionary of the London Mission.

Then he was considerably moved at the opening of Corea to the Gospel, and felt stirred by the desire which animated some of the Fuchow Christians who were under the influence of the Rev. Mr Wolfe for starting a foreign mission there. He seems to have made a journey to this new country to examine into its opportunities.

In the meantime his own spiritual life was growing. To overcome the all-powerful ideas of ancestor-worship, so far as even to put away the treasured tablets, was a great task to him. He was asked, "Will you not be willing to give up your tablets, as well as to stop the prohibited worship of them?" He replied he would like to keep the tablets as valuable pieces of family property; they could be stowed away in a room with other curiosities, where the many foreign visitors who came to his house could see them. We said, "There will be evil if they are kept; they will prove a dangerous fascination." We had a meeting of leading Christians of the different missions to consider the matter with him. He did not show any relenting at the time; but later on he came to our Congregational Union Assembly, and advanced to the President's table with a parcel carefully tied up. Opening it, the tablets were revealed. To foreigners they might appear only an elegant curiosity, but to Chinese the giving up of such valuable household treasures

showed how earnestly our friend was moved in trying to do right. To ask a Chinaman to give up his tablets is like asking an Englishman to give up his Bible.

"Tek-Sui was impressed by your visit, and told me of the important truths you had set before him." Mr Ahok showed his sympathy with my effort to reach the upper classes when he spoke as above. Tek-Sui was a wealthy man. Through Mr



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Ahok's introduction I had visited him, and had reasoned with him concerning the truth of forgiveness of sin. He had not been able to admit it. Basing his argument on a sentence of the Chinese classics, "Sin against heaven, no place of prayer," he said, "There is no hope for really bad men." At the time, he was slow to admit that bad men could be saved; subsequently, however, in conversation with Mr Ahok he admitted that there was truth in what had been advanced by me.

A friend once remarked that he was even more impressed with Mr Ahok's spirit than by his money-giving. Through his businesses established in different parts of the country, and through the openings into society which his wealth gave him, he was brought into contact with all kinds and conditions of men. He always found opportunity to witness for God amongst them, so that none could mistake his position as a Christian. He ever showed a profound respect for Christian countries, and seemed actuated by a strong desire to visit England and America. He failed to carry out his wish, but he gave up his wife to come to Britain. She attended over a hundred meetings, and pleaded so effectually for women of China as to leave a lasting impression. It has been said that she was trained in the school of Miss Cooke at Singapore. This may in part account for the ability she showed in advocating the Great Cause. The plan adopted at the meetings was for Mrs Stewart (C.M.S.) to interpret whatever it occurred to Mrs Ahok to say. The addresses had considerable effect. At St Leonards, for example, the ladies were greatly influenced. They relate how Mrs Ahok, having passed a huge gasometer, and learning its use, employed the illustration most effectively, saying that Britain was a great storehouse of light, but of what avail without more channels for communicating it to the world at large?

The fervent spirit of this Chinese lady, the first who ever came to England to plead for the women of China, was shown when she expressed herself as being ever desirous to work, so as to be able to say to the Master, "O Lord, I have done all in my power to advance Thy kingdom." It has been suggested that if, by suitable questions being put to her, Mrs Ahok had been led to open the arcana of Chinese life, the profit of her visit would have been even greater than it was. Anyhow, her influence will not soon be forgotten. In her simple faith, having herself encountered so much for Christ's sake, it seemed as though Christian ladies of Britain might rise up and go forth in companies to answer the call from China. She was unable to understand how those who are called *Christian* could remain in

their wealth, luxury, and self-indulgence while a great country was yet unevangelised.

Seeing that her visit was so successful, efforts were made to bring over her husband. It was found, however, that illness had overtaken him. Before his beloved wife could be by his side, he had passed away; and the lonely widow became subject to the curses of heathen relatives, who assailed Christianity as the cause of disaster to the family, and eagerly took possession of the property. It is painful to think that by the death of Mr Ahok China missions have lost one of their most progressive spirits; and yet we are led all the more to utilise the sacred memory left by our departed friend, as showing what kind of men may be raised up to influence the vast populations to be evangelised. The regeneration of the country is yet in its infancy, but prayer and effort may well be employed in seeking to raise up men like Thomas Ahok.

CHAPTER III.

A Pioneer.

HE came to us twenty years ago, expecting little, apparently, save earthly good. He was an orphan, and suffering from the rigorous dealing of imperious relatives; but suffering is the schoolmaster in China who trains men for God; and under his burning sense of wrong, Tan came to the Christian Church as an asylum of comfort and aid. He found more than he expected—a world of need in his own spiritual nature; and the importance of earthly troubles faded before these new wants. He decided for Christ. Just about this time, there were some remarkable instances of conversion on the lower parts of the North River, where his home was; and his attention was strongly drawn to these. He was himself specially attracted by that much-despised institution, the prayer-meeting, where social worship seems to furnish exactly what the Chinese require, a nucleus around which all the elements of a Christian society may gather. Just as our children prattle around us, so these moral children, speaking to God, betray themselves in their needs and longings as they never will do, because they never dare, in conversation. The free intercourse, too, with the preachers on these occasions, and the mutual confidence exhibited by those who gather, seem quite phenomenal to those who come in from outside; and Tan found both stimulus and profit. The place became Bethel to him in his troubles, with all the awe and self-dedication, and, if you like,

bargain-making, which Jacob exhibited in like circumstances. Tan made profession of his faith, and very soon had opportunities for exhibiting the passive graces of the Christian life. His relatives simply treated him as an alien. They intercepted his correspondence, and kept back from him remittances from abroad, of which in his orphan state he had sore need. His patience under this injustice was so striking that even his enemies were impressed, and their active opposition entirely ceased. Ultimately, he even so won their affection that they, though heathen still, were willing to put themselves to some sacrifice to serve him. And thus it happened, that he who came to us for refuge, in the hope that the power which Europeans are supposed to have might be advantageously employed on his behalf, made his way into this promised land of spiritual attainment, literally flowing for him with milk and honey.

A very similar entry upon the unexpected came for Tan when he decided on seeking service in the ministry. Here, still more than when he sought out the Christians for the first time, was there need for the purification and ennobling of his motives. The idea of a man being a man, with all sort of attainment possible to him, is new to China; and it is not surprising if converts, seeing new worlds before them in connection with Western thought and Western godliness, ambitiously frame for themselves a career. There is no caste to hinder them; while the spectacle of a native, loved and trusted by his fellows, speaking with them and for them to God, counselling them on their most personal concerns, and, above all, proving by the success that attends his labours that Heaven is on his side, has immense fascination for them. So Tan entered our Training Institute, chiefly with the sense that it was the gateway to an honourable profession, and it was only by degrees that the responsibilities, as well as the greatness, of the Christian ministry dawned upon him.

How deeply he saw those responsibilities we had gratifying proof. Life in Amoy is a sharp trial for a young man from the

smaller towns, as indeed the free life of a university at home is to those who have been previously under control. But Tan came through his temptations, and settled down as a hard and faithful student. Then, when he was sent out as a preacher, he learnt for the first time the counterpart to the honour of the ministerial office, in the toils and hardship which a faithful servant of Christ has to endure. He was appointed to succeed a man older than himself, and of some weight. Many of the congregation were elderly men, and age counts for so much in China. All this meant difficulty for him. Tan was miles away from any brother minister, and could seldom see the missionary, except when visiting the station on circuit. His heart sometimes sank within him, and he was driven the more earnestly to God for succour. Even when sick he would be waited on by members of his flock for counsel on the thousand trials and problems of native life. There are cases of discipline strikingly like some we read of in the Epistles; there is anxious dealing with enquirers as to their understanding and following out the precepts of Scripture against many idolatrous and evil customs. Everywhere is there strain for head and heart. But in one respect he was original. He determined to trust to God for his maintenance. Instead of allowing the usual practice of collections, he arranged that there should be a collecting-box—*am kui*, "dark box"—in his chapel; and left it to the free will of his people to give as they were led. This was the first case of the kind in the *scores of churches* of the Amoy regions. It cost him something. It was a test of the principle of his members. He still prefers this plan to any other, and seems to feel it to be a means of grace to himself as well as to his people,—so complete has his rescue been from the professional idea of the ministry.

The time came when it seemed best to encourage the autonomy of the church by giving it a pastor of its own; and after all the preliminaries the missionary brought the matter for decision before a full meeting of the Christians on a Sunday morning. There was a large gathering, and deep earnestness. The congre-

gation was too intent for even one man to go through the performance, so irresistibly comical to Europeans, of rising from his seat, judiciously cooling it down with his fan, and then bravely resuming his place. One by one the members advanced to the President's table, and recorded their votes. The women—for, great as is the innovation, women as well as men vote in our Chinese churches—for the most part *sent* up their ballot papers. It was open to the church to vote for any preacher they chose ; and it was a striking proof of the general confidence reposed in Tan, that, without a single exception, every paper bore his name. Such unanimity, not very common at home, was almost unprecedented in China.

He who came into our ministry for the sake of a career soon gave proofs of that ministry on wonderfully different lines. He became conspicuous for self-sacrificing endeavour. Turning his attention to church extension, as well as vigorously carrying on Christian work at his chapel, he secured, largely through the confidence reposed in him, a house to use for a place of worship in a district where no chapel existed, and where there was great difficulty in obtaining a footing. Christians gathered, and won for themselves public esteem; Tan's name was in itself a guarantee for reliability ; and soon the ground for a more permanent structure was offered as a free gift. Tan threw his whole heart into the rearing of this chapel, as well as he might. So, too, in a wider sphere, he became the champion of aggressive Christian work, leading a crusade against infanticide, the interests of which, in our local Congregational Union, he strenuously advocated in repeated speeches, by committee work, and collection of funds.

In the midst of a troublous time, when conflict pressed hard upon him, he was found by a missionary absorbed in the study of the watchman's responsibility as recorded in the book of Ezekiel. It was thus that he exchanged the dreams of personal ambition for the courage and holy calm of one qualified to sustain the cares of a whole country-side. Once more the land ahead, which promised a subtle self-gratification, proved when he entered it to be the region which he must conquer inch by

inch. "The Canaanite dwelled then in the land,"—that was enough for Tan; win it he must.

Paul had the notion that a bishop should not be above doing the work of an evangelist; and a most interesting chapter of Tan's recent career has been his pioneer work along with a European missionary in the North River region. It is a puzzle to some people how the European can secure safety, and, what is vastly more important, touch the springs of the native life in new and untried parts of the country. The method is really simple. We make a rule never to take any important step affecting the Chinese without carefully consulting the most reliable natives. If possible, we keep such a man at our elbow, making him not only a travelling companion, but also the confidant in all our plans, and the middle-man, or actual agent, in transactions with strangers. This not only allays hostility, but many a time information is gained, which only a native can obtain; while in case of trouble a reliable witness is at hand. For another reason, besides his own qualities of head and heart, Tan was just the man to take up the North River. His surname there is much what Smith is amongst ourselves, only with this difference, that in China men of the same surname claim relationship, and do not hesitate to appeal to a fellow-clansman for any assistance he can render. A sociable man withal, dignified yet kindly, yet with grit enough in him to preven his being talked over, and trying to make a mere tool of the missionary. Sometimes he quailed, but in truth the circumstances were perilous enough to have made even retreat excusable.

Leaving Amoy in the gospel-boat, a considerable sea-going craft, we soon find ourselves at the mouth of the Pakkhe, the North River, running through a portion of the Fuhkeen province. We pass under the noteworthy bridge near its mouth, now crossed by the telegraph, which is in constant use between the great cities of the Empire. The stream is broader than the Thames at Windsor, but nothing has been done to make the best of it; and, what with tide and current, and the absence of embank-

ments, the river goes sprawling here and there over golden sands, rendering navigation a matter of great intricacy. Here the shores are low, covered with sugar-cane, and only after a few miles does one sight the loftier hills. At Pholam Tan joins us. He has been relieved from the charge of his church for a season, that he may make the journey with us. Soon we enter the Highlands, where the hills come down to the very water's edge, and the dark-green mountains mirror themselves in what can only be described as a chain of small lakes connected by the stream. The population, including both the dwellers on the banks, and those who live inland, is reckoned at about a million. In spite of walled cities, with remarkable pagoda towers and memorial arches erected by imperial authority, market towns, and villages, the region strikes the traveller as being sparsely populated for China. It has, however, excellent industries, which only wait development.

Down stream come the tea-barges, each with its shrine of the patron goddess and its sticks of burning incense, its crowded passengers, its snug corners for opium-smoking, its sweating, shouting boatmen pushing the craft along by lengthy bamboo poles, except when it goes dashing down the rapids. Other boats bring bales of paper, made from bamboo. Then there are the huge rafts, big as Rhine rafts, made up of smaller rafts, which have shot rapids and leaped waterfalls on their perilous journeys from many an upland forest. The water-mills on the banks of the tributaries are largely pounding incense, which is made from the fragrant wood of the district; and one sees, within a certain well-defined area, packages of fruit, bananas, pumeloes, and oranges, which have been raised in the neighbourhood of the stream. Busy as the people are, however, the undeveloped possibilities of trade are enormous. Anthracite coal of fine quality, limestone, probably iron ore and other valuable commodities, may be obtained from the hills in scientific fashion, instead of the present toilsome and primitive mode, by burrowing a hole into the side of a mountain and scratching out small basketfuls! The river-bed, too, might be cleared from

many of the obstructions for the conveyance of these marketable goods to the sea-port, Amoy. If, instead of the opium-poppy, which now fills many a fair tract of plain—a crop as dazzling to the eye as it is attractive to the self-indulgent—the space and labour could be used in raising good food, the spectacle of the boats and banks would be less painful. The people would be saved from their chronic underfed state, and the low condition of health which debars them from true thought, feeling, and action. As one of the most influential men of the whole

SHOOTING THE RAPIDS.

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country-side put it in reference to opium, "Sam pai tsoa pai, te pai long-tsong pai" ("Timber is ruined, paper is ruined, tea is ruined, all is ruined").

There was one incident of our river travelling which none of us are likely to forget. During night-time and flood, navigation is impossible, but on one occasion the flood just permitted travelling. We were fairly under weigh when more rain began to fall. Not only did the water rise, but the merciless showers hindered the boatmen in the exercise of their skill. The captain

was willing to abide by our wish as to continuing the voyage; but we left the matter in his hands, and he held on his perilous course. The force of the current was frightful. To be landed on the top of a sunken rock, or even to graze what the natives graphically call "The Stone-knives," was certain death for all on board; while the mere risk of having the boat split through the force of the waves, a mishap which has happened to some of our party more than once, was imminent. There were two hours of such navigation as made all things on earth, except the seething and cruel flood, seem dim and distant.

Landing, we continued our journey by chair. Rugged mountains, some of whose heights are never scaled, were on every hand. One pass on the road rises some three thousand feet in six miles, and giddy precipices overhang yawning chasms. Between the mountains the river flows—a roaring torrent for a great part of the year, and at all times marked by cataracts more majestic than safe. It is marvellous how the skilful, hard-working boatmen, by helping one another, succeed in forcing their craft up the rapids. Coming down, as may be imagined, is exciting work, though it is said that only one boat in a thousand is lost; but accidents anyhow are numerous.

We found the inhabitants peculiarly kind and courteous. Tan dealt cleverly and kindly with them, and for the most part they were friendly; but it was impossible to shut one's eyes to their backwardness in the industrial arts. One could not help picturing what the region would become were Christianity established and the material prosperity which comes with it secured.

This day of ingathering and development is still far away. The population is wholly given to idolatry, and is suffering ills of body and mind of which Western Christians know little or nothing. It becomes a question at times whether to pity or blame. The misery and degeneracy of family life were sickening. Here is a sample of the evils of polygamy. Tha, who was an honorary mandarin, and the head of a large tea firm, showed the missionaries on an early visit to the region considerable

kindness. He introduced them to his friends, and provided a home for them in his own house, which bore the name, "The Place of Good Friends." This very man brought into his domestic circle a secondary wife, who, as she increased her influence on him, determined to oust his chief wife and daughter-in-law from their position in his heart. For years the contest went on; even visitors to the house could not shut their ears to the words of recrimination and scorn which passed, and Tha was forced into the humiliating position of shrugging his shoulders and making commonplace remarks about women's ways. It ended in a tragedy: the wife and daughter-in-law made away with themselves. Unrestrained passion, mental worry, and perhaps remorse, brought Tha to an early grave. His eldest son, now master, turned this Hagar to the door; and with her went all her connections. This act of Rhadamantine justice performed, the young man himself sank into a career of mere self-indulgence, for which his inheritance gave him ample means. Nor did it fare better with the Ishmael of the story, a young Chinese Apollo, who, if appearance and manners had been able to decide it, ought to have turned out a splendid fellow. Such is heathenism!

In addition to scenes of distress which came before our eyes on this and succeeding journeys, many a tale of woe was unfolded to us. Nothing was more painful than the opium victims. One of them, whom Tan knew to be of good family, but was utterly sunk in indulgence of the vice, after hearing right willingly from time to time all we had to say, bitterly exclaimed, "Had I but taken your counsel, I need not have sunk so low."

A man named Phu also gave us much trouble. He was above the average in intelligence, and was well-to-do in his home and business. His ability also made him equal to the work of a magistrate; but he was given over to his passions, and while he made some effort to overcome them, he did not succeed. He was a cause of great disappointment and grief to us. Sometimes we had ground for strong hopes. He had thoughtful, earnest, and prayerful conversations and fellowship with us. He dis-

continued his use of opium. He attended, though with some timidity, our public services, where he shrank a good deal from the ordeal of open examination as an enquirer. He assisted in the support of his minister more than any of the other converts at the station. He even went with us on a missionary journey, and attended continued sittings at a preachers' conference, where the facts of individual and collective Christian life were entered into with searching effect and important results. He professed to be going to marry his son to a Christian girl. He showed so many symptoms of good inclinations that he was even proposed for baptism. His failure was probably due to his not following up his convictions at all risks, and trifling with the inclination to evil.

Still, he had terrible hindrances. His chief difficulty was doubtless in himself. But his poor wife, in the usual state of ignorance and depravity of the women, and shut away from light and truth, worked, without intending it, for her husband's destruction. When he was nearest to the Kingdom of God it seemed to her that he was in peril of that fearful thing, an alliance with foreigners. She—and hundreds of thousands in China would still feel with her—dreaded this more than all other evils put together. She even tried to coerce him by a stratagem of her own which threatened to destroy her life. No wonder he was affected; indeed, on the low level of consequences, her relatives would have simply ruined him by litigation had she died. Against her own interest, she sought to humour him, pleading, "Take a second wife, and go on with opium; but do not be a Christian." Such counsel to such a nature was putting fire to straw. His mother also added the weight of her opposition. The awe of a mother still lives in China, and a big man will even submit to a beating administered, for discipline's sake, by a wizened old woman, just because she happens to be his mother. The weak nature of this man fell again under the power of evil. Bad associations supplied what was lacking in temptation. He is to-day in the terrific position of a man who is losing his soul by inches, while the overtaxed body, the unfit

instrument of evil, is ever giving signs of the inevitable collapse. He is indeed in advance of men who do not know the light. He still prays, and keeps up a certain pathetic intercourse with Christians, they not caring to sheer off and leave him to his fate. But the fascinations of the present world are poison to him. It is a case over which angels might weep. To Tan such a man is paralysing—another proof of how dependent the native pastors still are upon help from us.

We were always eager to secure a building we could call our own, and in which we could carry on every kind of effort. Avoiding the use of the name of any deity whatever, so as not to provoke opposition, and to strike a chord of brotherly sympathy in the new region, we called these places "The Halls of Salvation"—a name frequently used for a hospital, which we justified by treating the sick who came to us. But even though we worked on such lines, not even Tan's ingenuity could always keep us out of trouble. For instance, in one place we secured possession of a house for forty years, conditionally upon our repairing the place. Here began the trouble. Some one appealed against our tenure, through fear we should build an upper storey, and spoil the luck of the building. An influential man, whose nephew had helped us, was asked, as responsible for his nephew's conduct, to deal with the young man, stop the work, and turn us out. He seemed absolutely furious, and threatened to have his nephew buried alive. The young man absconded, but no harm reached us. The secret explanation, as afterward told us, was this. Years before, the uncle had been thrown into prison, which by no means meant more than that he had an enemy. There he lay, with no prospect of release, broken in spirit, and suffering in health. Expecting to die where he was, he availed himself of the convenient laxity of Chinese imprisonment, and arranged to have his photograph taken for his sorrowing family. The photographer turned out to be a Christian; and, faithful to his convictions, he told his customer of the power of God to save him. The message struck a chord in the prisoner's heart, and he began to pray. His release followed, and, like Joseph, his

influence increased after leaving the prison. His very presence put down gambling. He was a terror to evil-doers. He had not the courage to confess Christ, but it was believed that he still remembered a prayer-hearing God. We had a friend at court in this man. Still we suffered much in securing legal deeds, in illegal claims for compensation, and in trouble with officials, who doubted or professed to doubt, our status, and declined to confirm our purchase by their receiving from us the ground tax. But troubles, one after another, were lived down.

The converts came from almost infinitely varied scenes of idolatry, superstition, and moral evil. From amongst them may be selected one, if only from his contrast to mild and courtly Tan. The sound of his name is not unlike Samson, and this name is suited to him because of his extraordinary strength and fierceness. He was a chronic fighter. If no other means of attack were at hand, he would take up a huge jar, and hurl it at his antagonist. When put into chains, he broke them. One day, in one of his broils, his pigtail was torn out by the roots. It was a queer keepsake, still he kept it by him in token of the revenge he would have on his foe. But under the power of the Gospel even Samson was subdued, and gave up his terrible hatreds. He handed the pigtail to the missionary in token of the change in him.

The pioneer journeys with Tan became quite frequent. As years went by, we found that our labours were beginning to tell. Seven companies of converts, men of all ages, women too and families, were gathered in. From the various abominations of heathen life men turned to God. As usual, in the present stage of mission work, the official classes were the least represented. Of literary men there were some, but tradesmen and ordinary people proved most open-minded. It is not possible to express the parental yearning we felt for these converts, and how it became the choicest joy to visit them in circuit, confirm them in their new faith, and encourage them manfully to bear their much tribulation. In these mission stations congregations now exist, with their deacons and ministers, and are

proving themselves a power in their respective neighbourhoods in radiating Christian life amongst the mountaineers on every hand. In a region without newspapers, where they spread all news by conversation, the seven congregations are centres for as many of the institutions of Christianity as can be established. They are coming to bear their own expenses, and have made a beginning in extending the Gospel on their own account. It is only a small fraction of the million that has yet been gathered in; but Tan now rightly thinks that pioneer journeys are no longer needed. The hopes which kindle in the breast of this devoted worker and his colleagues are like those of mariners homeward-bound when they hear the cry, "Land ahead." They believe there is a promise for their work, and for this region, that the people shall yet be all righteous. Then the power of reproduction has been marvellously manifested in the gathering of this band of toilers. From first to last the enterprise has been undertaken in a profound spirit of prayer; and the answer already vouchsafed, and the way the converts themselves are praying for the progress of the work, have given rise to the liveliest expectation of even larger blessing at no distant date.

CHAPTER IV.

A Recruit.

IT is ten o'clock in the morning in Te-hang. Business, such as it is, is in full swing, that is, no one is so busy but that he can stop at any moment for anything that attracts his attention. Some small farmers from the villages around are chaffering over the price of produce. A little group of mandarin servants are discussing their newest item of official scandal. The burden-bearers, scantily clad, and besmeared with sweat and dust, are passing the gaudily-painted front of the city-god's temple, whose crude colours under the fierce sun seemed to make their task for the moment doubly hard. The shade of the banyan in front of the temple is very tempting. They would turn into even the Christian chapel to get out of the blaze.

The Kong-ko, or legend-teller, has a larger audience than usual this morning, and a lively theme. He is describing some of the scenes in the "Red Chamber;" and although the sentiment of the book may perhaps be a little above the level of the motley crew before him, he is far too alive to the importance of being interesting, and to the effect of his narrative on the coming collection, to lose his grip of the crowd. Indeed, by lively gag, which would rather have astonished the author, he is showing his vivid power of imagination. For the time his face has lost all its stolidity, and not even the traces of his indulgence in

opium prevent his conveying the impression that his acute mind is in vigorous exercise. He has just reached a climax, and will stop here, while the jingling cash marks the appreciation of his hearers. Politely wishing them "Good-morning," he goes off to his well-earned rest, and—opium!

But the opportunity is too good to be lost. The Khoan-se-bun—the exhorter to virtue—countenanced though he is by the high officials, is too used to more restricted audiences for him to allow the crowd to break up without his trying to have his say. With a gesture of impatience a few of the listeners break off from the crowd: they belong to two very different classes—the thoughtful men, who see through the sham of a man of vice lauding virtue; and the choice spirits with whom, half-an-hour hence, the orator will perhaps be carousing. But he is heard, not merely with indulgence, but with a certain respect, to the end; and although Chinese virtue is rather a rotten show, he says a thing or two that might be uttered with advantage on Sunday mornings from Western pulpits.

By his side, as he draws to the close of his long harangue, there appears a young lively Chinaman, in a long blue dress, his tight cap covering his closely shaven head, and his suppressed animation making his very pig-tail quiver. Other folks' pig-tails, so far as they hang at all, are plumb enough under the formal recital. But our young friend seems less Chinese than the crowd; a warmer pulse stirs his veins; unlike so many there, he has neither to blame opium nor passion for unnatural languor and pallor.

He is waiting his chance, and now he gets it. Some from the first are asking him whether he is Kong-ko or Khoan-se-bun, but he won't answer them yet. He wants to plunge into the problem of God *versus* Idols. He always has been impetuous. He was the delight, yet continual anxiety of the over-wrought Englishman, who tried to make him what he is, and who is quite prepared to find him when he next visits the station as spiritually limp and as full of self-depreciation as he was the first day he was told off to face the crowd.

In a few rapid sentences the young man has put himself in touch with his hearers. The semi-official exhorter to virtue was tall, and, but for his cynicism, might have been handsome. Our young preacher is short, and round, and boyish, but he has already overcome the disadvantages of his insignificant appearance. He is talking of realities, not of ethical abstractions. He shows that he feels himself the *Welt-schmertz* of China. Who can shut his eyes to China's miseries? "Where are the idols," he asks, "when the whole creation groaneth and travaileth?" Society, as well as every man, needs present help —for so he understands salvation. This must come from God, for the idols have had their day, and they have failed to help. Then, in a few well-chosen sentences, he tells of the Christians' God. Ay, he has a right to speak; for though in such a region he rightly dwells on things as they appear to, and are known by, his hearers, there are occasional flashes of experience which show that even this boy-preacher has himself penetrated into the regions of Divine communications, and has found the living God.

Not that he has an altogether easy task. A slight allusion to Jesus—it was a mere quotation of one of His familiar words—brought almost as a matter of course that stale joke from a loafer, which it is impossible to reproduce in Western language, by which the Name that is above every name is changed into *boor;* and of course the usual laugh followed. Yet, on the whole, the men attended well; and if the young evangelist was guilty of any partiality, he showed it in addressing himself mainly to the brighter spirits around him. Not always, however, to the most acquiescent, for a great rough fellow, who propounded as a poser, "What about the opium trade?" got his answer and something more.

It was as well that this interruption came, for right behind the questioner concerning opium was one who alone would be worth ten years of missionary effort, and who might hardly have been brought to the front as he was had it not been that the interrupter waxed uncomfortable under the evangelist's plain

speech, and began to edge off to safer distance. This left the stranger freely exposed—a quiet, dignified man, who, pausing at first at the back of the crowd, had gradually got nearly to the centre of it, nay, almost face to face with the preacher. Very soon it seemed as if all that was being said was being said to him alone. Of course the tone changed. It was no longer worth while to refute mere vulgar charges, nor even to inveigh against the nation's vices in their grosser aspects. Here was a man whose face bore no trace of the carnal sins—a face that was meant to show a hearty, honest joy in life, yet was strangely sobered,—more, surely, than it was meant to be. There was no satisfaction in it, not even self-satisfaction; composure indeed, but the composure of one who suffers, and yet knows not how, by moving hand or foot, to make his lot more tolerable. The man was valuable enough in the preacher's judgment to warrant a very sudden close. Missionaries and those whom they have trained have long since learned that to get to close quarters with a single individual in the audience is better than any amount of rhetorical completeness. A Chinese out-door sermon can start again at any time, for one can always get an audience; but to see even the least chance of a human life taking a new start is what brings the missionary's heart into his throat, and will do so for many a year to come. The crowds come and go, the preacher gets his one chance; and if there is any impression, it is so rarely told that one of two things happens to the preacher himself,—he either hardens under the delivery of his message, or in very anguish of spirit redoubles his effort so as not to be defeated in reaching not only ears but lives.

CHINESE SOCIABILITY.

The preacher, relying on the general sociability of the Chinese, addresses a plain question to Tek-Hu, "How does this strike you?" "Oh, very good," and this said with a placid smile that shows that a good deal more will be needed before this strong, deep nature is really moved, just as something more

than the mere casting of a line from the noisy, bustling little tug which is going to bring a great East-Indiaman up-river is needful before the towering structure will respond to the impulse from the smaller craft.

"'Good!' But I have found it good for me as well as others, and it is a thousand pities that you should look at it as a mere stranger. Will you not come with me?"

PUZZLED.

Kiau, our evangelist, and Hu, his new pupil, were seated together over tea and pipe in the Te-hang chapel. Chapel is everything to the Christianity in a Chinese town—place of worship, school, library, hospital, hostelry, and even a sort of standing arbitration court! The walk has been but a short one—perhaps just as well for Kiau, whose exhaustion corresponds with the intensity of his appeals; perhaps, too, just as well for Hu, who, unless he had been a stranger and a man of some amount of force of character, would hardly have been seen walking the streets with an ally of the foreigner.

"But I tell you this new religion has been a flood of light to me," says the young enthusiast, quite forgetting that hardly a ray illuminates the outlook for his new friend; and that, indeed, Hu is only there because he is mentally and spiritually ready to subject any novelty to examination. The young preacher's ardour has been perfectly fascinating, and his kindness of bearing a little startling to one more accustomed to confer favours than receive them; but neither ardour nor kindness was necessarily a proof of his doctrine,—so at least Hu argued to himself, while all the while he had to confess himself both surprised and attracted by the new experience. Besides, the atmosphere of mutual confidence which pervaded "chapel," and which never fails to impress receptive spirits brought into it for the first time, was already exerting itself upon him. How could it be that here, where the foreigner appeared only a few times a year, it was possible for men to trust each other, serve

each other, give up for each other, and, strangest of all, go out with an invitation to those from whom they could derive no possible benefit? Still, he said,

"It will take a good deal of light to brighten our Chinese life."

"True," says Kiau; "but it is not the space to be lighted, but the strength of light that I want to talk about;" and he launches into a perfect rhapsody, in which his own experience of God's love and service, and that of fellow-Christians, whom he always names, get almost hopelessly interblended, until the clear logical face of Hu lights up with a smile of amusement, but certainly not of incredulity. It may be very novel, but this preacher at least is interesting.

"You people love," says he at length; "you love queerly; not as we do, where we expect to reap some advantage. You love daringly. Why should you take into your affection some of those who make your little community here? We should let them rot! Then why should you trouble yourself about me, here to-day and gone to-morrow? Your love does not flatter. You seem to be severer on yourselves than you were in speaking to the crowd just now. You tell *us* our faults; but you shut one another out of your fellowship if mere traces of those faults are shown within your circle. We have morality, but it is not dynamic. We enforce nothing except by penalties. You unite as a society to serve one another in love, and, for the matter of that, to serve everybody; and if you don't do it you are self-excluded from your churches. There is something behind you. You could not dare us as you do were it not for a sense of protection somewhere."

"Yes; but the protection is not that of the foreigner, but of Him whose work we do."

"Ah," says Hu, "there you are with the hardest thing of all to understand in your system—you seem to do what you do, not because you fear punishment if you do not do it, but because you would miss some honour or glory if you left it undone. You love this strange unseen authority over you. You love men, and

you serve them, because you say, you yourselves have been loved and served. And you call yourselves safe when you are doing Heaven's will."

"Do it yourself," says Kiau, "and see if you do not find it as I have described."

So the talk finished for a time—unsatisfactorily, some would say who want immediate results which they may tabulate. But Hu did not leave "chapel" that day, or, for the matter of that, at night even. Business—the business that had brought him to Te-hang, might stand; the life in this little enclosure he found more worthy of his attention. He had been led unwillingly into the House Beautiful. There was private reading in the afternoon. Something which suited his education was put before him; the great Western world with its dominating ideas, with its spiritual aspirations, with its gigantic moving Christ, seemed quite near. Then in the evening, in their prayer-meeting, they spoke to Him—so familiarly. They sang of how He had loved them—washed even Chinese mire from them; made them like the King in His desire to serve. The secret life was unveiling before Tek-hu. The converts retired to rest, Hu to think. "This must be of God," he said to himself, "for it is movement."

A STRANGE MAN.

The following letter contains facts otherwise untold:—

"Dear Teacher Sadler,—We have had a strange man amongst us. His name is Tek-Hu. He comes from Ku, where his people have grain stored for fully twenty years. He told us his home was quiet, and cut off from even such knowledge as is ours of the outside world. He is of good education and has been in the army. But he tired of bow and arrow, horse-racing, raising weights, and our Chinese oddities, such as tearing a paper dragon in front of an advancing foe, and bowing to a commanding officer before firing at a target. But what disgusted him most were the indiscriminate slaughter in time

of war and the rottenness and deceit of military life in time of peace. So he went into business, which brought him to Te-hang on one of his journeys. He heard me in the crowd, and I got him to the chapel. He was almost courtly in his bearing, and treated our people, even those below him in social status, with a strange respect. He heard so willingly, and talked so sensibly of those very woes which our Christian religion has made impressively apparent in China's lot! He saw in us the working of a new force; but I got him no further than this—that he would call at the Changping Station in two days. Can you see him there? KIAU."

A MODERN NICODEMUS.

High up on the bank of the North River is the old walled city of Changping, commanding one of the great roads to the interior. The place, though dilapidated and dirty, is a crowded centre on market-days, and the boats ply up and down the river in great numbers. The religious life of the inhabitants has quite a comic dash in it. They represent well-known characters in effigy on procession days. Even a missionary, with sun-hat and white umbrella, will figure in this Chinese carnival, not in any sense to raise obloquy, but from sheer desire to present various aspects of society.

The boat-traffic is regulated by market-days, and Hu arrived at Changping about mid-day. He made his way at once to the chapel as his place of residence, intent on knowing more of the Christian community. But here a test, to which he had not been subjected at Te-hang, awaited him. There was no young enthusiast, whose fervour, even if it should ultimately prove to be fanaticism, was so striking, and who, without pretending to advocate Christianity in its metaphysical aspect, could at least present it without wounding the susceptibilities of an educated hearer. There was instead, in charge of the place, an evangelist who had not even enjoyed the advantages of seminary training, and was by no means showy in his methods. On the other hand, he was well read in the vernacular New Testament,

and when hard pressed did not hesitate to admit that he was no scholar, but that he found such and such an utterance on the point in question in the page of Scripture. For Hu to avail himself of the help and guidance of such a teacher was a further sign of the spiritual refinement and moral sturdiness which China does not wholly lack, but which Christianity alone seems able to develop.

For several days Hu remained there, profiting indeed by what this worthy preacher could show him of the contents of God's Word, and awaiting with interest the arrival of the European missionary whose visit was then due.

The missionary came, and with him Pastor Tan, gentle in disposition and earnest in character. A few preliminaries having been gone through, the missionary and the new inquirer found themselves together in the private room of the station.

There was little argument. The objections which Western minds are wont to bring against supernatural religion hardly seemed to present themselves, while Hu's own richly-gifted nature saved him from the superficialities and flippancies of Eastern inquirers of the baser sort. The moral earnestness of the man, the seriousness, and even gravity of his demeanour, the thoughtfulness of many of his questions, and an unvarying courtesy which made free intercourse easy, gave the missionary no ordinary opportunity. Add to this that Hu's mind, like some others of the best of his fellow-countrymen, is of a distinctly metaphysical turn, and it will not be wondered at that the missionary felt he might dwell at once upon the very mystery his auditor was so ready to investigate—the new birth.

It was almost a unique experience for the missionary to come into contact with a native at once so free from the thousand empty conventionalities and make-believes which, from the day of Confucius onwards, have regulated Chinese life. The talk naturally turned to the varied aspects of that vital change pointed out by our Saviour to Nicodemus; and the immediate response, as well as the events of after-years, have since made the missionary feel that a man of really greater spiritual stature

than the Jewish doctor was asking, "Can these things be?" There were some of Hu's questions which could hardly have occurred to his Palestinian prototype: "If I become a sharer in this life in Christ, what about my ancestors?"

"Are they not in God's hands?" was the answer; "He loves men better than any of us; He is the judge of all the earth, and will do right. Your ancestor-*worship* of course must cease; not that they will become any less than they have been to you, but more, for as surely as there was any good in them, it will be your lot as a Christian to find it out when you meet them in the coming world. Instead of worshipping them, which you know is unreal, and carried on mainly in the hope of getting something from them, you will treasure their memories just as you believe that they are themselves treasured of God."

"They will call me a brute at home if I cease to worship my ancestors."

"Of course they will; but that is because of the merely cosmical idea that you owe your origin to your ancestors. We are talking of men, begotten not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Goodness, at the best analysis, is God-likeness, and bears the mark, not of our ancestors, but of our Father in heaven. God's offer to you to-day in Jesus Christ is the offer of new, Divine, fuller life."

"Then I should be more the brute, you think, if I continued to worship my ancestors?"

"Certainly; but it will cost you something to live the new life."

"I know it will. Why, with my Eastern upbringing, will it not do for me to follow out my bent, and to let the West follow its own? We have long pretended that you are the barbarians. It is mere cant. In our hearts we know you to be great; and after what I have seen the last few days I could almost believe you good. That passion of you Christians to reach the lives of men amazes me."

"Yes; but it is only a copy, very feeble at the best, of a larger and nobler love—the love of God to us; and it is this love in its

breadth and fulness which makes it impossible that ours should not be the absolute religion, not one of many competitors. Were we only richer than yourselves by a mere fraction, we should want to share our wealth with you. Did we only think the Father had been a little more explicit in His directions to us than He has been to you, we should want to share our information with you. Not till ancestor-worship makes you as strong for self-denial as Christ makes His people can we cry 'quits' as you propose."

"'Self-denial!'—that is where you cut us to the quick. We in China seem to have spent centuries in learning to grovel; you speak as person to person, and when any one fails to understand you take all pains to explain, for His sake. We look to the centuries past, you to the centuries which are to come. The best of us, like you, are willing to take some pains about religion; but we have yet to learn your secret of joyous faith in God, and then steady attention to duty."

"It was in the very first age of our Christian era that one wrote, 'Your labour is not in vain in the Lord.'"

"That brings me to the very point for men who have to make a choice. Granting that your religion is sublime, is it practicable? Or, to put it in another way, can a working, every-day religion ever attain to a real sublimity?"

"I should answer 'Yes' to both your questions. The sublime becomes practicable if you remember that it is a new relationship between persons of which we are speaking. Turn from your endless maxims for a moment, and conceive yourself face to face with One to whom you owe simply everything. You live because He lives; you are dead to your bad past because He died; you are healed because He was wounded. Can you look Him in the face without saying, 'Thy will be done'? You go to the task nearest to you; you can do that, at all events, with His help. Let it be the commonest duty, and it becomes sublime by His willingness to help you, and your willingness to do His will. And here, I think, I have answered both your questions."

"Do you really mean that your religion consists in living for this Other, this Jesus, and in letting Him decide each detail of the life?"

"Surely; and we mean what we say. He never can be satisfied with a ritual."

"Then might not an enemy reply that this Christianity is a mere matter of the heart and mind, and therefore never can regulate conduct?"

"The enemy would only charge the religion of Jesus with what is the standing reproach of your systems. Your Classics say fine things; but who does them? Jesus has His own estimate of noble speech, unaccompanied by brave and sturdy doing. In His own words, 'Not every one that *saith* unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that DOETH the will of my Father who is in heaven.'"

"It seems to me as if you were claiming a peculiar honesty for your system."

"Can you claim it for yours? What have you underneath all the beautiful talk of your sages, and those who quote them? The question for you, however, is not of your nation's sincerity, but of your own. What draws you at this moment? Is it anything whatever that originated in Chinese thought, or is it an influence which you see has been exerted upon some of our people? It is God in them that has made you ask about God above them, and above you. His invitation has come to you also."

And thus with the earnestness of one who knows that, for the most part, such an opportunity comes but seldom in a life, and that for better or worse Hu's whole fate hung on his decision, the missionary pleaded with him, and also for him.

IN LOCO PARENTIS.

What were Hu's motives? He had approached us far more than we had sought him, even though it may be at once confessed that we had been willing, and were still willing, to take

more than ordinary pains to be of use to him, and secure him for Christ's kingdom. The European missionary feels at every turn that if the evangelisation of China is ever to be accomplished, it must be in large measure through the instrumentality of such as Hu. That the man, brought up in his quiet home, had felt the glamour of Western influence as it had been cast upon him at Te-hang and Changping, there can be no doubt; perhaps at this moment there is no stronger predisposing influence in the native mind toward Christianity than the power behind the missionary enterprise. Spite of prejudices against us, the name of Britain stands for power, wealth, pertinacity, audacity, and even brute force in China.

Whether Hu liked us or not at first contact, he had enough of the Chinaman's curiosity about him to avail himself to the full of this opportunity of intercourse with us. But there was more in his case than mere curiosity. There was a large measure of that heart-craving for something better than anything in Chinese life; and there was a spiritual readiness for good, which is vastly more common in China than Western critics can easily understand. He had been so kept from grosser vice that the consideration of personal holiness was to him more than an empty name, as it is to so many whose moral nature has been paralysed—nay, petrified—through years of sin. Besides, the enthusiasm of young Kiau had been the means of introducing him into a society which had a singular charm for him; and that something more than merely intellectual interest in it had been aroused had been shown by his willingness to accept the help of the simple preacher of Changping, as Saul was helped by Ananias.

But a new test of the man, and that severe enough, was now to be made. If there was gold in him, the ore could hardly be too finely pulverised; and he was worth all the efforts we could put forth to show him Christianity at its best, in its activity and self-denial. There is in the Chinaman a wonderful amount of that which Confucius taught as the compendium of virtue—reciprocity; and upon this in Hu's character we determined to

work. We devised the unusual course of stopping his homeward journey, interfering with his business, standing between him and his wife and relatives, and bending his whole energies toward the one thing needful. Instead of letting him pursue his way as a free agent into his own home circle, there almost certainly to efface impressions which had not deepened into conviction, we formed the plan of turning his face due south again. The whole aim was to stand to him *in loco parentis*. We were willing to spend money, and, what is of more importance, time and strength, over him,—anything, rather than that he should slip back into the ineffable dreariness of heathenism. But the sacrifices we were to make for him were trifling compared with the sacrifices that he was called to make in following out the proposed course.

STRUGGLES.

Pholam is not untrodden ground to the modern student of missionary enterprise. Mr Macgowan's *Christ or Confucius* devotes a chapter to a sketch of the place and our church there; and the story is under-told rather than exaggerated. The town is beautiful for situation, just below where the North River emerges from the Highlands; it has all the charm which clear water, and golden sands, and luxuriant fruit-trees can give; and although the busy market is held amidst the usual squalor and dirt of a Chinese city, and the opium dens, which Mr Macgowan has described, are not few, the Christian community is beginning to make a slight impression upon the place. The Christians have a wide circle of influence, which grows warmer as one approaches the heart of it. The Sunday services are great times at this station. Converts are men of mark, the deacons diligent, and the pastor, Tan, the missionary's companion in this voyage, worthy to rank with Bunyan's Evangelist. It was to the heart of this community that we decided to send Hu, always supposing that he would be willing to go.

Pastor Tan, who already had begun to exert a charm over the inquirer, was obviously the proper person to propose the

arrangement to him. Would the prospect of residence in a Christian home be a sufficient inducement to make him forego the pleasure of rejoining his own circle? A Chinaman loves home. As much as a Frenchman, he believes in the family council. Would Hu not at least insist upon consulting those at home before taking this step? If he did so, we ran every risk of losing him. Delilah, or perhaps more than one, might be against us. Besides, it would be impossible for him to join our party, and go down to Pastor Tan at Pholam with us. The

NIATAU, CHINA.

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invitation to follow up his quest must needs be peremptory—as much so as the Master's "Follow Me" to the first disciples. Let Tan do his best, and God prosper him!

Tan came back from consulting Hu radiant and thankful. Not a word of objection. Just the least compression of the lips; just the least mist in those deep, loving eyes, as he realised that to go meant taking Jesus at His word about not loving father or mother more than Him; and Hu acceded to

the proposition. The Rubicon was passed. Three days later we bade him farewell. Tan and he were standing on the bank, while the boatmen were getting their lumbering craft again under weigh. They watched us round the next bend of the river, and then made their entry into the town. For a week or two Hu was charmed. He had a truly congenial spirit in Tan—a native, yet one to whom he could really look up. He made progress, even rapidly, in both head and heart knowledge of the Faith. He was brought under the spell of that wonderful Christian community in which so many of Asia's problems are solving themselves through the influence of the Gospel.

But a reaction came. Tan could not always be with him, and he became home-sick, as might have been expected. Can it have been right to turn one's back on one's kindred in this fashion? After all, is there not a subtle element of self-gratification mingling with nobler motives in this new quest? Might it not even have been better to have gone with a little light to the old home amongst the hills, than to have sought the larger vision, and to have found one's self separated from all the old associates? Yet even in this struggle he realised, as he had never realised before, the poverty, the pitifulness of the old life. Was the love that he was losing worthy to be compared with the love, human and Divine, that was being expended on him? Sometime, and somehow, might not the God who was now claiming him claim the very circle of which he thought so much?

And thus, in busy Pholam, in the quiet chapel building, a little oasis amidst the gleaming, dusty, noisy streets, the old Gethsemane conflict was renewed, and the victory was won, where Jesus won it—on His knees—in the Saviour's own prayer, "Not my will, but thine, my Father."

THE MESHES OF THE LAW.

More than he imagined had Hu been choosing his career. He had come from military and mercantile life into the life and

service of Christ; and, not unreasonably, we hoped that he might do much to spread the Gospel in the North River territory. Like his Master, however, Hu was confronted with temptation just when public usefulness awaited him. As well for Tan's sake as his own—for such a pupil is no small responsibility—he had been allowed to move about amongst the North River churches, associating with the preachers. He had, of course, given full proof that he believed in Christ, and had been baptized. But just when we were expecting him to appear at the Toa Oh, or Training Institute, he delayed. We wondered much.

Another visit to the district showed us that he had been summarily stopped in this forward step by a native pastor. At one of the stations, an insignificant place called Chiah-tsui, the Christians had suffered opposition from the heathen because they had discontinued their support of idolatrous institutions, especially the popular outdoor plays. We usually try to pacify such opponents by offering equivalents, to give more money toward lawful objects, such as road-construction and well-digging. For conscience' sake we ask to be excused from maintaining plays which are really in honour of the idols. We argue that we do not look to idolators to support our religious ordinances, and may justly be left free from the claims of ceremonies distasteful to us.

It must be granted that here there had been less open hostility and less public effort at conciliation than in some other cases. Unexpectedly, at a heathen festival, the pent-up hostility against those who dared to depart from the faith of their fathers found vent. A strange excitement prevailed. Hundreds of frenzied men and boys hurried in Chinese irregular fashion to the little place of Christian meeting. The building was fired, and, with its contents, wholly consumed. A preacher who reasoned with the unreasonable populace was severely wounded. The situation was exceedingly critical, because unless redress for the converts was secured, they would be at everybody's mercy; all kinds of foes would rise up, and by subtle and persistent annoyance

and persecution life would be made intolerable. A messenger hurried to the European missionary, and he consulted with influential men. The case came before both foreign and native authorities, and it was settled that the chapel and furniture should be replaced. Now came the question as to who should bear the cost. Every person connected with the outbreak wished to make his burden as light as possible, and to avoid being reckoned with for other old scores by the mandarin at the same time. A lawyer was needed. Hu, as was said of him, was "able for anything;" and the opponents of the Christians sought to employ him.

He could doubtless have made much money in this way. Being asked to undertake the case was in itself a high compliment. On the other hand, in China an advocate can only with difficulty avoid becoming a partisan, depending for success upon the most unlawful methods. Even a mandarin can hardly keep his hands clean; how much less a mere underling in their corrupt courts? The risk Hu ran was nothing less than being beguiled by self-interest, and turning what religion he had into that low channel. Hence the pause in his opening career of Christian service.

It was a critical moment when he met the missionary and native pastor on the subject. He was not persuaded at once. He had been a little harshly treated, and his spirit was wounded. We explained to him, with both kindness and firmness, the need for decision. We all talked together as in the presence of God. The Good Spirit again asserted Himself in the mind of Hu. He fully gave up the earthly prospects which were so tempting, and chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the pleasure of earthly gains.

THE ACADEMIC MILL AND WHAT WENT THROUGH IT.

After such a proof of his self-surrender, there was no denying Hu admission to the Training Institute. To this Institute native students for the ministry come from scores of stations

extending over hundreds of miles. They come together as men of decided piety, honestly desirous of profiting by the course of study to prepare for serving God in their native land. Many a missionary who has been privileged to meet them in prayer and conference, and to lecture to them, has found himself thankfully learning from them. Nowhere does the task of making Christ known amidst such peculiarities of race appear so great; and nowhere is the real value of the native mind and character so apparent. The course of study varies of necessity according to the man; but there always has to be much plain speech on the principles of love to God, and of the inner life, as opposed to all the passions, appetites, and propensities of animalism. There is a resident native tutor regularly in charge, to give instruction in subjects connected with native literature. The curriculum, which usually lasts three years, is varied by Union classes and examinations with the students of other Missions.

Hu took kindly to our student life. He was more mature than many of his fellows, of better family, and married. Hence he became the companion of the native tutor, and attracted the attention and respect of several of the missionaries. Study was easy to him, and he also bore a part in the various departments of Christian work which were then going forward at Amoy. He willingly acted as amanuensis, engaged to some extent in public services, and showed interest in the formation of a Young Men's Christian Association. But his mental alertness showed itself most markedly in conference with us. His mind was peculiarly alive to the perils connected with changes from heathen to Christian customs. For instance, he was filled with concern, and sought a special interview with his European teacher on the subject of the freedom of intercourse allowed by Christianity between men and women. He told, with unaffected dismay, how he had even seen some of the students looking from their rooms over the college chapel at the school-girls as they were marching home from service! Some men would assume that such horror was hollow mockery; with Hu it was real, and the indication of a stern process going on in his own

mind. He was honestly concerned to guard against every improper thought and feeling; but it took much careful reasoning to show him the real superiority of Christianity to heathen life, notwithstanding a mingling of the sexes, which seemed to him at first both strange and perilous.

Student life brought holidays as well as work, and Hu availed himself of these pretty regularly for visits home. But home was in little danger now of proving too engrossing in its claims; once fix a Chinaman on a course, and he will generally stick to it. But this very fixity of purpose was a problem to his friends. They wondered what had befallen him. To his good and affectionate mother, shut away from the world in her mountain home, whence her son had been called, like Abraham, into a land he knew not, her son's going to Amoy would seem as strange as one of our own friends going to Central Asia. In China the wildest ideas exist about places not far distant, and yet made distant by want of easy and rapid means of communication. Mountains almost impassable, sedan-chairs carried on men's shoulders, and flat-bottomed barges, not even towed by horses, make journeying formidable, though it be in the Flowery Land! To get from Hu's home to Amoy would mean first a tedious and rough journey by land over foot-made roads; then a river voyage down rapids in an antediluvian boat; and then a passage in a sea-going craft, wherein one might experience all the peculiarities of sea-sickness.

So far as time is concerned, it is no object to the Chinese. Whatever it might cost, the good mother decided to send her younger son to look after the elder, and see how he fared. The journey was duly accomplished. The visitor, to his great satisfaction, found himself lodging in the Institute alongside of the object of his search. He not only found Hu, but made many friends. He was treated well; he had opportunities of seeing the bands of healthy boys and girls who march in order to the Christian services. He was able also to join in the assemblies of the Christians; to observe the manner of DIVINE worship; and to have his mind lifted up to the God of the heavens and

the earth; to hear singing which, though imperfect, thrills not a few, and to be treated as a friend amongst those whose life breathes peace and goodwill. Thus the report he carried home of Hu and his surroundings was so interesting to the mother that the good old lady rejoiced, as Jacob over his son Joseph in Egypt. Her son had attained to a position amongst those who were honourable. He was safe, well, happy, and, so far as mental and moral concerns go, prosperous.

So much was the old lady impressed in favour of Christians, that she allowed her daughter-in-law, over whom, of course, according to the fashion of the country, she had full control, to go to the central school for women, then generously opened to our Mission by our esteemed friend, Mrs Talmage of the American Mission. Mrs Hu proved herself an apt scholar. Difficulties of dialect were overcome. She made her way into the hearts of the strangers amongst whom she was residing by her winning disposition. Her studies were carried on with success so gratifying that Mrs Talmage, the lady president of the school, even proposed that Mrs Hu should stay longer than the usual course. This could not be accomplished; but enough had been done to show to the women of her district the advantages of female education, and to prove of how much a despised woman is capable. Before returning home, by the decision of the church in Amoy, she was formally admitted by baptism into fellowship. There is some hope that eventually she may be one amongst the leaders of women's work in the district as deaconess, or Bible-woman, or in some other way suited to her opportunity.

THE FIGHT AT LENG-NA.

Hu's training was now wellnigh over. Won by bold and fervent witness for God in a public thoroughfare, he had found the natural sociability of his fellow-countrymen purified and ennobled in Christian fellowship, so that the house of God had become to him as attractive as the Interpreter's house. He had followed the call of Christ with decision and promptitude,

not unlike some of Christ's earliest disciples. He had forsaken all that is dear to a Chinaman, and prepared for the service of his new Master. And now it was his duty and privilege to arm himself with the mind of the Great Chief, who, for the joy set before Him, publicly endured the cross, despising the shame.

Lacking in physical courage to an extent hardly credible to the Western mind, so that the mere sight of a morphia-needle, which a doctor was about to use on his behalf on one occasion when he was ill, threw him into a perfect panic, his moral courage developed in quite a wonderful way. Just because it was so, we employed him in an undertaking which taxed all his resources both of courage and wisdom. We wanted a permanent sanctuary and general accommodation at Leng-na, a station for many reasons the most difficult of all in the district. It was the largest centre of the North River district, the abode of men who had most to conserve, and therefore were terribly conservative. It was the seat of chief government for, say, a hundred miles round; and officials found it to be their interest to study those who were heads of old-established families and clans. To this place also came the thousands of would-be graduates from the surrounding towns and villages to the imperial examinations; and these students, it is well known, are turbulent in the extreme in asserting the importance of existing institutions, and discouraging innovations. Our position there was most serious, especially as we could not establish ourselves in a house of our own. For Chinese look twice before granting permission to Christians to obtain houses or ground upon which to build.

The moment we get premises of our own it seems to them that great changes are imminent; as though native life were not only touched, but invaded, and leverage gained for widespread operations opposed to reigning ideas. Serious opposition had been displayed in the place in time past. The landlord of a house we only rented had been imprisoned; great commotion had arisen; placards had been issued charging Christians with

unearthly crimes, such as taking out the seven precious parts of the human body,—heart, lungs, kidneys, eyes, brains, etc., for various medicinal and other uses. Any one becoming a Christian was to be put out of the relationships of public and social life, and, what is most terrible to a Chinaman, to be denied entrance into the Hall of Ancestors. For this end the chief men of the place banded themselves in solemn league and covenant.

Time passed. Sometimes it seemed that a better spirit prevailed; yet no sooner did we try to avoid our exorbitant rent, and secure a permanent house, than the old animus broke out afresh. The mandarin, who had seemed to be friendly as to our getting premises, shrank back as soon as pressure was put on him by our opponents. At last we thought we would try to let the matter be arranged on purely native lines, without reference to anything of foreign or Christian influence.

Hu was entrusted with this delicate business. He was to go and seek for a house or ground upon which to build, in his own name, as an ordinary Chinese gentleman. He undertook the troublesome affair without a murmur. The only ally he could find—and Hu regarded his advent as a special answer to his prayers—was a heathen, with whom he foregathered on the journey. He boarded in this man's house. But it was a heathen home; and Hu felt a strange weight upon him in not being able to declare himself a Christian. Moreover, for his mission's sake, he must needs be isolated from the Christians of the place. When he wished to pray, he betook himself to some mountain solitude. Nothing but these quiet hours sustained him. His spirit chafed to hear criticism, and even slander, of Christians, while unable to confess himself and openly defend the truth. When he did inquire, "What is there against the Christians?" he was told, "Oh, nothing; only we do not want them. They are very good, only we would rather they would leave us alone."

He fell ill, and they suspected him of demon-possession. That illness was a long nightmare for him. His old dread of

demons and sorcery, in which every Chinaman for a hundred generations has been brought up, sought to re-assert itself. He put it down, and struggled to make the best of himself in every way in order to re-assure the friend who had taken him in, who, though a man of position, was as much a prey to degrading notions as the common people, whom both he and his class despise.

Hu went steadily on his way, and found relief at last. The ground was purchased, the legal deeds were secured, and payment made immediately in money and bills. The missionaries rejoiced over the news. It was thought well to go as soon as possible to the scene of action, and consult how now to proceed. It seemed best to open everything to the mandarin in a private interview, get his imprimatur on the deeds, and consult him as to the kind of building which would most conciliate the persecutors. All this was done to our utmost satisfaction. And yet opposition was renewed, and the mandarin became its tool. Such a state of things in China means years of conflict, for there might is right, though it would be bad indeed for our enterprise if right did not win in the long run.

It is this hope of ultimate success that encourages us in the prolonged struggles we have had here and elsewhere.

At first everything seemed against us. The mandarin seized and imprisoned one of our middlemen. Again and again a like peril seemed to be overhanging Hu. More than once the town became simply too hot to hold him, and it would have been the height of imprudence not to have withdrawn for a time. There was no deficiency now of physical courage; the spiritual heroism of the man was apparent at every turn. He would take all risk of private wrong; he would chance the mandarin's wrath falling upon him, with the inevitable consequences of capture; he would do anything and bear anything rather than that the plan should fail in which he felt the honour of God and of His Church to be concerned. Never did early confessor or devoted Jesuit put himself more completely at the service of the cause. It was the triumph of the man's nobler nature. When others quailed,

he was the one man inflexibly firm. The qualities of the head were as conspicuous in this hour of trial as those of the heart. "There is nothing in a Chinaman when you 've got him," say some; Hu may be left to reply.

THERE OR NEAR IT.

For the champion to doff his armour and to become the student is never easy; still less for one who has been a leader in the fray, as Hu had been at Leng-na, quietly to submit again to the restraints of academic discipline; yet, when arrest was imminent, this is just what Hu did, resuming his place as before at our Amoy Institution. The time soon came, however, for him to enter on his life-work; and he was quite willing to be sent back again to Leng-na, the scene of so much trial. Sending him there as the recognised head of the Christian community was like casting him into the den of lions. But he was just the man for the post. He had learned to value the truth of God as a precious heritage for himself and his fellow-Christians. At any cost to himself, he was prepared to maintain that Gospel by which his own life had been elevated. Amid all the depressions of heathenism he had found the Eternal Light and Fire. He was now prepared to contend for the new faith, and to realise more and more of its power—a power of deliverance from the sins by which the Chinaman is enslaved; a power setting free the conscience from a sense of guilt through faith in the Saviour, and liberating the life for noble activities.

To Leng-na we sent him; and there, whenever the flame of persecution has not blazed up too fiercely, he has laboured ever since. We have not got our chapel even yet. When we tried to build upon our site—for which, be it remembered, we hold the deeds—they levelled the walls with the ground, and, as a mark of ineffable contempt, strewed the place with dung. Like Cyprian's ministry at Carthage, Hu's ministry at Leng-na is bound at present to be more or less intermittent. All is ferment

and unrest. Some at home might say there is as much cause for anxiety as hope ; but the one bright feature in the case is that Hu is there, or hard by, not forgetful of the task to which he has bent his life's energies, nor unmindful of the claims of that career he has deliberately and so bravely chosen.

CHAPTER V.

A Moral Hero.

TWO thousand years acquaintance with moral ideals has not saved China. The lynch-law which is practised, such as taking out the eye, cutting off the ear, and even the head of a man caught in open vice, is not saving her. The inner sore and smart of Chinese society, and the frightful commonness of depravity, the mere spectator of a street quarrel may gather for himself. Charges are blurted out of crimes, for which the legal code exacts the heaviest penalties,—charges to which no Chinaman would submit if they were not true. One of the best of our native pastors started life under temptations to sins against which the apostle uttered such solemn warnings to Timothy. Su had indeed had a brother, who had fought and conquered; his earnest spirit had successfully grappled with evil.

Again, Su had an uncle, whose character was so attractive that a venerable missionary declared he would like to go to heaven, if only to see this good Chinaman. He had an aunt, too, who had shown the nobility and vigour of Christianity in its early stages in China, by devoting her life to an effort to save a profligate son. She followed him from city to city, tried by every means to win him from evil, and died worn out, if not heart-broken—with nothing to show for her toil. But then the son, as well as the mother, was Su's relative; and if the saintly life was a stimulus, the bad example of the life of the self-pleaser told with terrible force upon a nature itself too

inclined to indulgence. Su had an equally terrible warning in another brother, who had gone down in the mud-bath of heathen vices. And perhaps the greatest mischief of all came from the Western world, which we are prone to think touches China but slightly. Earnestly looking for light and help, Su found darkness and stumbling-blocks where he least expected them. What he saw let profligate Europeans tell. He said to the missionary, "We should be prepared to regard your countrymen as angels, but——" The pause, and the obvious detestation and amazement which his unspoken words expressed brought, as well it might, the blood into the cheeks of the Englishman.

The old conflict between flesh and spirit went on in this ingenuous soul. Be it remembered that laws of healthful control of mind and body are hardly understood in China. As a native gentleman of medical skill has said, "It is little good at present to speak on some subjects, except to those who are wise and can receive your teaching." Such there are, however; and these have exclaimed at the close of a simple exposition of hygiene as affecting moral self-government, "This is what gold and silver cannot buy." China has yet no White Cross movement, and missionaries are only too familiar with the spectacle of young fellows, even children of Christians, sinking under temptation, to rise no more.

Was Su to be one of these? He even asked himself the question, Was it any use for him to try to escape? It may possibly be a help to some young men at home to know where Su found deliverance. The Gospel of Christ had been pressed on his conscience, not simply as if Christianity were a sort of blessing superadded to human life, but an actual power of deliverance from sin.

Poverty, hardship, and, above all, work, have proved important helps. When Su was at college, the natural thoughtfulness, penetration, and independence of his mind were encouraged. He rapidly increased his knowledge of the Word of God, and faced the problem how to make it known, how to deal with souls, and how to bear the responsibilities of Christian service.

His course was comparatively brief, because of his material wants; and he hastened into the duties of active life, for which, indeed, he was more fitted than many an older man.

He emerged from the Institution just when we were commencing to train the converts to support their native ministers. This plan was at first bound to meet opposition, which threatened the existence of some congregations, and tested, as nothing else could do, the sincerity of the converts. They had been accustomed to have their expenses found for them, and were slow to learn the real need of voluntarily exerting themselves. They could not realise that now their minister had to look to them for support. It seemed needful for the Mission not to help at all, so that the duty of the members might be brought home to them. Su was thus in his hour of discipline thrown on God, and he was not forsaken.

A still severer test of his power of self-denial awaited him. Changes in the churches came, and Su honourably made way for another brother. For a time, at least, he was lost to the ministry. He showed true Chinese power of adaptation, and went into medical work, where he succeeded so well that his professor set high store on him. All the allurements of money-making rose before him. But special efforts were made on his behalf, and his old devotion to Christian work revived; he gave up worldly prospects, and set himself to diligently labour for the healing of souls.

Su, like so many of our workers, has had his temper and patience tried by heathen persecution. His cross took the form of an experience of chapel-burning. At a time of a regatta festival, which, like almost all public efforts of the kind, is connected with idolatry and superstition, a rude man wandered into the chapel of which Su had charge, while preaching was going on, and insisted on being allowed to take his turn in speaking. A scuffle with the chapel-keeper ensued, and the man was shut up as a disturber till the police could be found. Stories were then spread amongst the great crowd that the man was being hung up by his limbs. Cries were raised to rescue

him. The fury of the mob was great. The mandarins were repeatedly applied to, but were indifferent. Suddenly the rabble determined to set fire to the chapel, which was the finest building we had inland, and well suited to the large city in which it was situated. The deed was done, and the building and furniture destroyed, the inmates happily escaping. Incendiarism is a great crime in Chinese law, and the excitement among the mandarins was now as great as their former indifference. They were, indeed, ready enough to make good the loss to the Mission, and astonished at the smallness of the demands. But naturally great uneasiness ensued, as the people had to be taxed for the amount. Worse still, the sum was made to include the exorbitant claims of low officials, who had the conduct of the business.

From this scene of passion and cupidity Su came out with high credit, choosing rather to suffer loss than to press his own interests. It seemed good, however, for him to have a change of scene and work. He was employed for a time in Bible distribution. Here, however, as before, God was with him. The story of the Cross, as he told it, struck a vibrating cord even in the deadness of heathen human nature. The missionary fire was fanned within him. If he was being used to help others, he argued, must not God be sufficient for his own spirit's needs?

It was an important mark of confidence in him when Su became native tutor of our Training Institute. We desired to make special efforts on behalf of the students; and in these Su was considered worthy to assist. His diligence in working for the minds, and still more for the hearts, of the young men, was remarkable. His care seemed to some to be almost too minute. Questions of conduct were scrupulously gone into by him, as they always are by men who themselves have to fight for every inch of ground they occupy; and happy were they who could appreciate such dealing, not only for their public work, but, better still, for their personal character. At this time the missionary arranged to meet him for daily prayer on all matters of importance, a practice which brought blessing to both.

As a man finds himself in his home life, so is he. The trials to which Su had been subjected in his personal history were not greatly relieved in his family. His wish had been to form a marriage alliance on the lines of an intelligent, supreme love, according to what we profess at least to be the practice in Christian lands. Both he and the lady whom he sought were subjected to merciless criticism for daring to act differently from the received custom by which young people's marriage arrangements must be all left to their seniors. It had seemed to Su that he might well look for a lady of natural talent and superior culture. The one he sought had distinguished herself; she had turned to full advantage her school training, and had herself become a well-known instructress. He, however, had to learn that the joy of having such a companion was not for him. Like many even in Western lands he did not succeed in obtaining a help-meet, so far as his intellectual faculties were concerned. Then, as the years of his married life went by, he discovered that every woman is not well fitted to manage a family. The wife allotted to him was indeed kind and gentle, but she lacked faculty in bearing the responsible cares of motherhood. His best work was done away from home, where with undivided attention he could bend his energies to his duties, and be drawn aside neither by the fascinations or the repulsions of the family, but, like the Levites, giving himself "wholly" to the heavy work of his office.

Ere long Su was entrusted with the pastorate of what is called a district church,—that is a church in the centre of a district, with a circuit of stations, over which he would have a large share of control. It was always gratifying to the European missionary on his visits to see the proof of the pastor's laborious and self-denying efforts. Toilsome journeys, and business details, such as those involved when chapel-building was going on in different directions, were quite his forte. When litigation came, as apparently come it must for many a year in the history of our missions, he was always ready for action. Unabsorbed by such controversy, however, he carried on his Bible-classes, prayer-

meetings, and consultations on different questions of church government. A thoroughly accessible man, he was always ready to see any caller. Business meetings of deacons and conferences of preachers seemed to call out his vivacity and mental resource. Even when he had his own cares, he many a time showed "the heart at leisure from itself, to sooth and sympathise." When his stipend dwindled, because debt and dunning are a curse of Chinese life from which the Christians can hardly escape, he continued to find prizes from his own pocket for the children of the various schools at their examinations. The distresses of the people around him, the poverty, persecution, and private and public trouble of the Christians, weighed heavily upon him. But the same concentration upon the moral and spiritual life of those committed to his care which he had manifested in the Training College was characteristic of him here also. It was galling to him that so many of the converts should seem hardly capable in the midst of their worldly worries to find the comfort and help of the great verities of our faith. They are to be pitied rather than blamed at the present stage. The clamorous demands of this present life, in a country where population is so great, the waste in idolatry so serious, and the means of living so comparatively restricted, all accentuate the difficulty of living for the Unseen and the Eternal. Add to this, that Su is in a part of the country where poverty is specially terrible, the badness of the soil is unusual, and what crops there are are often wasted by village feuds.

From the midst of works so complex Su was recently called to occupy the important position of chairman of the Amoy Congregational Union. The duties of such an office are not light. The meeting is composed of the strength of the Mission. Missionaries, male and female, take part; all native ministers are also members *ex officio*. There are delegates from the churches, the object being, by means of fellowship and delibera tion, to arrive at the most effective ways for the accomplishment of the greatest amount of good work of all kinds.

Several meetings a day are held on successive days, the

expense of entertainment, printing, &c., being borne chiefly by the churches. Statistics of all the churches are produced and scrutinised, the state of religion in each is discussed, and the manner in which both minister and people have fulfilled their mutual contract is examined. Opportunities are afforded for each church and individual to raise points of importance in due form. Discussion is carried on by recognised rules. The most important social topics come up, such as prevention of infanticide, village wars, and persecution. Efforts are made on behalf of various social reforms; questionable institutions, such as illicit brotherhoods, are considered and condemned. Matters affecting the spread of Scriptural knowledge, and especially the training of ministers after, as well as before, they leave college, are duly weighed. Feeling sometimes runs high; as for example when a question like medicine, its use and its objections, is considered with a view to evangelism. A chairman in such circumstances has as much as he can do to secure liberty to all, and prohibit license. So when burning questions of Christianity *versus* heathen habits and customs arise. Moreover, an address is always expected from the chair. Su gave a masterly utterance on "Adaptability in Christian Work," showing how some could never adapt themselves, but only meet the requirements of persons who pleased them. The ideal worker could suit himself to the needs of all. Much valuable and reasonable suggestion was put forward. Altogether, there was so much of quiet strength and firmness of composure displayed that Su made some present think how inevitable it is that a people so well fitted as the Chinese should before long take the management of their own affairs.

In his calm, unaffected manner Su once spoke out his view on the moral changes effected by Christianity. He is not at all satisfied with the attainment already secured, but still marks well the progress that is made. The most wonderful change, he argued, is in the giving up of the idols. These have had a great part in Chinese life. They are sought after on all occasions; great sums of money are spent on them.

All this is altered when natives become Christians. Again, human life is more sacred, infanticide and suicide being greatly checked. A strong sentiment has been created against immorality, so that whereas it is the rule among the heathen, amongst the converts it is the exception; and even when such an exception does occur, there is a sense of shame, formerly unknown. The public conscience now speaks out against stealing, so that a man who would readily transgress before will now shrink from evil-doing. The same may be said with regard to lying. How far covetousness is uprooted is hard to say. The dislike of anything in the shape of boasting is strong in Su, and his ideal is very high, or he would doubtless have put the case less dispassionately.

Reading between the lines of this review, one sees traces of his own spiritual conflicts. One of his relatives not yet converted said he felt the claims of Christianity to be so serious that he must either leave the Christians, or leave his sin. Su has had this choice presented to him; he has chosen the higher path, and has shown that it is possible for a Chinaman to walk in it. He is a living proof that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, delivering from fleshly lust, and bringing the whole nature into subjection to the pure and perfect law of Christ.

CHAPTER VI.

Pastors' Autobiographies.

THE position of a pastor is, of course, the highest promotion to which a native Chinese Christian can look forward in the world. Out of many preachers, but few are chosen as pastors; and since to them is entrusted the tremendous responsibility of church discipline in their respective communities, the utmost caution is necessary lest unwittingly we lay hands suddenly on any man. At ordination an autobiographical sketch is very properly required from the candidate, and two of these, as a mere sample, are given below in all their native sweetness and simplicity. Pastor Chhoa and Pastor Phi do us at least the service of showing us how Christianity and the Christian ministry appear to native eyes.

"My original locality," writes Pastor Chhoa, "was Tang-oa. We were four brothers. I was the second. When I was young I lived at Amoy, and in company with my parents believed the doctrine, and received baptism at the hands of Mr Stronach. When I was eight years old, I entered the Koan-a-lai school. That year, on a sudden, we were confronted with the Taiping Rebellion, which especially affected Chang-chow. When the news came to Amoy, the whole place was filled with fear. So, with my mother, I escaped to Toa-Tin, to the house of my uncle. A year or two after we heard of the finish of the rebellion, so I came back to Amoy and to school again; but our circumstances were unprosperous, our family plunged in

poverty; my elder brother had gone abroad many years, and no news came from him. My father was always ill, my younger brother was small, so I was forced to give up study, and help mother to make a living. Happily, God was gracious, so we did not despair. At the second year I was again at school. At thirteen years of age I received the communion. Altogether, I was in the small school six years. At fifteen years of age I entered the Training Institute for the study of Scripture. My opportunity was good. Alas, I did not know how to take full advantage of it! There was temptation in the vanities of Amoy, and the attractions of worldly reputation and money-making; so before long I excused myself on the ground of ill-health, and left the Institute. I got a letter of dismissal from Mr Sadler when I was seventeen years of age, and went abroad. I went to Hong-kong, Singapore, and Penang, in order to make money. Without knowing what would befall me, I went as a stranger to Penang. I sought out the church there to find some friends. Happily, I obtained God's blessing, and I had the kindness of Mr Macdonald. I attended morning and evening worship, received instruction as a child from a father with great affection. Every morning he took me for a walk to the sea-shore. Whomsoever he met, whether native or foreigner, he made known the Gospel to them. When I had leisure, I went home with him. He was very earnest in the Lord's work, seeking to save men, and never idle. When I saw this all my heart stirred under his influence. Again, I saw missionaries coming and going from China, or on their journey, resting a little on their way, and eagerly speaking of Christian things. One missionary I saw, a man of great ability; if he had been in business and money-making he would have made twice or thrice a missionary's income. Moreover, I saw him travelling tens of thousands of miles, and enduring winds and waves to come to our China. How I felt it! He did not desire wealth, or honour, or property. I sighed, and said to myself, 'Who am I, and how ignorant!' Secretly I prayed God to give me life to go home to China, and grant me opportunity to do the Lord's

work. While I was thinking, suddenly it occurred to me that when I was young mother always knelt and prayed, saying, 'O God, grant that my son may walk in Thy way, and by-and-by do Thy work.' These words of the former time I seemed again to hear. They were imbedded in my heart, so that I could not forget them. Unexpectedly I again met my elder brother, whose whereabouts I had not known for ten years. I suddenly recognised him. Alas! he was an opium-smoker, and his appearance exceedingly wretched. I took him to see Mr Macdonald. He exhorted him to alter his bad habit, and believe the Gospel. When I was twenty years old, I took my elder brother home to see mother. I became a little prosperous, and was again admitted into the Training Institute. At that time the Institutes of the three Missions united for examination purposes. I found a capital opportunity for study, and had the advantage of receiving instruction from all the missionaries. At twenty-three years of age I left the Institute to commence work. I was sent to Chang-chow, to the chapel outside of the East Gate; afterward, I became preacher at Kio-a-thau-hi; at that time there were only two or three self-supporting churches outside of Amoy. I for one was willing to be maintained by the native Christians; so I urged that church to exert itself, and some brethren laboured with me to lead the church to become self-supporting. Thereupon a 'call' was prepared, and handed to me, asking me to be the minister of the church. Not long after this, our churches of the two prefectures nearly all became self-supporting. I was very glad, but my health was not equal to my zeal. At the first, I did not understand what it was to be a preacher; the longer I went on, the heavier my duties became. Sometimes it seemed as though the church did not prosper, so I became anxious; sometimes it seemed as though the members were cold, and I studied what plan I could adopt to quicken them. Sometimes I saw apostates, without reverence for God, or regard for their minister. I received bad treatment from some of these men without resenting it. Sometimes the subscriptions of the church were irregular, and some-

times I met with difficulties amongst the members in the way of litigation, which they wished me to arrange for them. My wisdom was insufficient, so that I met complaints for my trouble, and during these rebukes was almost without a friend. But, I thought, 'There is comfort in prayer;' thus I was encouraged. Ah! bearing this office, I have met my sorrows, not knowing whether to advance or withdraw. Who knows these things except my Heavenly Father? Now I copy Paul, who said, 'I depend on Him who loves me, and so am more than conqueror.' Thus from prayer I obtained peace, and all my heart was joyous. At twenty-eight years of age I received Mr Macgowan's introduction to Koan-kau, to be preacher there. Now it is three years ago. In regard to carrying on the affairs of the church, I have had some prosperity, through men of experience and harmony helping me in sympathy with the mind of Christ. I dare not boast of my ability. I think to myself, 'I am lacking in grace and do not my duty;' but I wish so to serve Christ that He may say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' In the presence of the Lord I am watchful, knowing my deficiencies. I pray the Lord to help me, now that I am receiving the great grace of God in entrusting me with this office. Have I not reason for humility? My fear is lest I should not be suitable. I think over it day and night, studying how I may not slight what the Lord has given me. May my God Jehovah send down the Holy Spirit to strengthen my purpose, so that I may not fail in that which the Lord has entrusted to me! This is my most earnest prayer."

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"At eleven years of age," Pastor Phi told the ordaining brethren, "I entered a small heathen school. I heard that foreigners had established a chapel in the village of Tio-chu. There was an old man there preaching. I heard him say, 'The idols made by the hands of men are worthless.' Some of my fellow-scholars derided the preacher. I stopped them; I had heard the words, and never forgot them. While I was yet a child, I went with a fellow-villager to an idol procession. It

happened that a sorcerer was there, and I saw him become possessed by the spirit of the idol. I went home, and told father that such a spirit had taken possession of the sorcerer. My father said, 'The thief of an idol uses the thievish sorcerer.' He said this because the sorcerer was known as a thief. From that time I looked on sorcerers as thieves. In the latter part of this year my father became a follower of Christ.

When I was twelve years old, although I belonged to a heathen school, yet I went every Sunday with father to worship, and kept the Lord's Day. When I was about thirteen or fourteen years of age, I remember giving out on a certain Saturday that I had overtired myself, so on the Sunday I avoided going to church. But I was ill at ease; and, after all, I followed the rest to the service. About this time, I knew that I was a sinner, and must obtain pardon; the love of Christ was made known to me. Not long after, our family met adversity; my brother said to grandfather, 'Our family is unprosperous; it is all because so many of the family have entered the foreign religion; the idols are dishonoured, and bring on us this trouble.' Grandfather sternly forbad me and my brother going to church any more, and said if we dared to disobey him, he would break our legs. I then earnestly prayed to God to open my way that I might always be able to worship Him, and I received an answer to prayer. The persecution gradually stopped. Not long after the Church introduced me for baptism, which I received at the hand of Mr Stronach. I both rejoiced and feared—rejoiced because I openly belonged to the Lord, and feared lest I should do wrong. At eighteen years of age the Church introduced me to the Training Institute for preparation as an evangelist; thereupon I exerted myself in exhorting my parents to put away everything of heathenism. Fortunately, mother was willing to listen; God helped her; her heart very much inclined to the Gospel; thus our family was cleansed from idolatry. I became very earnest in the study of the Scriptures and theology. I was most anxious to improve the opportunities of receiving the missionaries' instruction. Although my strength was not equal

to great responsibility, yet my heart was truly united to the Church. When I was twenty-two years of age the native school-teacher could not be always present in the Institute, and I was invited to take part in the instruction of my fellow-students. Eventually, the tutor went out to be a preacher; and I was appointed to do his work for a time. The Institute increased in students. The missionaries formally appointed me native tutor, and also to assist in taking charge of the morals of the students.

"I further helped Mr Sadler to translate the Old Testament Scriptures into Romanised vernacular. When I was about twenty-four or twenty-five years of age I went to K——, to be preacher, and eventually was invited by the brethren to be their regular minister. I earnestly exhorted the Church to strike out evangelistic work in different directions. We made an effort at T——; this did not prove a success, which grieved me. At twenty-six years of age I was sent to Tngabe; it is now six years ago. I know that the work I did was not as faithful as I would like; my will was better than my power. My heart has been greatly set upon the extension of the Church. In carrying out such a purpose I have met with more difficulties than I can tell. At times the extension of the work has made me feel as though I were in heaven; but when difficulties have come my experience has been distressing. We cannot avoid great trials in carrying on the work of Christ, so that sometimes I have not been able to sleep the whole night long. There is always a danger of some Christians going back, becoming selfish and covetous. However, when I prayed, the Holy Spirit made me understand that, if I seek to please men, I am not the servant of Christ; and if I do descend to the spirit and snares of the world, I shall in the end certainly perish. Therefore I always exercise my conscience with fear, knowing that I must avoid past mistakes and old sins.

"The answers to my prayers have been such that I can never cease being thankful to God and praising Him. Now I am obtaining the great grace of God in His giving me this office. I am very much ashamed and afraid. I know that both my

abilities and my virtues are small, so that I can with difficulty be equal to my duties; but the Lord has called me, and I cannot give up His service to follow human notions. May I be like Elisha in receiving the Holy Spirit, so as not to make light of my stewardship!"

These pastors are still in charge of the churches over which they were appointed three years ago. Each, according to the bent of his mind, is carrying on earnest and successful service. Phi is more particularly absorbed in distinctly religious work, in church discipline, in the instruction of evangelists, and taking part in the supervision of a number of churches. Chhoa is given to more general forms of usefulness, though he too considers it a privilege to have fellowship with any spiritually-minded Christians who visit his station. Such brethren are yet in the early times of Christianity in China, and have fewer advantages than the elders who took charge of the New Testament churches, yet they worship the same God and Saviour, and there is for them and their successors a constantly enlarging outlook.

CHAPTER VII.

Discipline.

"IS this all that home means? Have I been taught, *and loved*, and seen for myself how others outside the life of our China çan make marriage something like an equal relationship, only to find myself, like all our women, in the vile net at last?"

The speaker was Ki—"the beautiful,"—pet of the European lady teacher, now wife, and, in the Chinese sense, mother, engaged as wives and even mothers sometimes are in Western climes, in the risky task of taking stock of married life, its gains and losses.

She was in her own apartment, in her own house—so far as a Chinese woman has ever her own house—in her part of that considerable conjoined dwelling, in which her husband's parents, and maybe grandparents also, reside,—a beautiful arrangement, according to Chinese ideas; and so it would be, if only they all were angels.

The room is meanly furnished; the comfort of a daughter-in-law is a matter of trifling concern in such a composite household. There is a little carving about the bedstead, which shows that Ki has married into a family fairly blessed with this world's goods. One little table, and a chair or two; no washstand; a brass mirror, a small comb, sundry paste-pots and cosmetics for the elaborate hair and face dressing in which the sex indulge in China, about complete the furnishing. No wardrobe. A few garments hang on pegs, and others are stowed in wooden

boxes. No carpet. No window, such as we think of; only a small hole in the wall, with a bamboo blind. Altogether it is a cheerless chamber.

Keen as Chinamen always are to secure an advantage, her guardians had conceived a respect for foreigners, and had consigned Ki thirty years before to the missionary girls' boarding-school. She had shown herself possessed of ability, and availed herself of her opportunities; she fell in love with her teachers, and developed very considerable force of character. The transition from the comfort, friendships, and comparative refinement of school to the drudgery of a daughter-in-law was a sharp one; add to it all that she had the ill luck to be affianced, in true Chinese fashion, without a voice of her own, to a heathen, who was also an opium-smoker. The horrors of such a marriage cannot be told. Only, be it remembered, that opium, which means physical ruin, makes the whole moral and spiritual nature grovel.

The usual restrictions of early married life in China had to be undergone; for some time Ki was almost absolutely under the control of her relatives. This meant little association with fellow-Christians, for which the distance from chapel would in itself have been sufficient to account. Does it ever occur to Christians at home, with places of worship in every street, how many thousands abroad are debarred from religion by mere physical distance?

Advancing age relaxed the iron grip of the mother-in-law, and the young wife was more free than before to regulate her own movements. How could there be home ties in such a case? She had no child of her own to care for. Her husband was often away, and, when at home, could never have attracted her better nature. With real desire she turned again to the associations of her childhood. "Chapel" is a great rallying-place on Sundays for the women as well as the men; and while there is inevitable gossip between the services, there is no lack of loving sympathy and mutual help. Both to relieve her *ennui*, and to give her a task, for which she was well qualified,

a missionary appointed her as teacher in an infant school; and later she became instructress in the language to one of the mission ladies.

Meantime the usual mark of respect and prosperity in a childless Chinese home had been secured by the purchase of a daughter. To be without successors, among an ancestor-loving people like the Chinese, is to be nowhere; if Heaven has not blessed you with children, you must beg, borrow, or steal. Simple purchase is quite a common method. A girl will often be given to you for nothing, to save the trouble of killing her. So, just for respectability's sake, Ki had entrusted to her the solemn responsibility of training an adopted daughter.

Meanwhile the husband was sinking deeper in his mud-bath. His absences were very long, and a Chinese husband, least of all an opium-smoker, does not feel himself constrained to remit money to maintain a household. Ki, burdened with the girl, came to feel the pinch of poverty. She appealed for help from her native pastor,—for a loan indeed, which he, considering her husband's character, was not likely to make. She was piqued, and determined to show it.

Be it once and for all understood by those who would gauge the importance of women's work in China, and who would realise the social reforms that have to be effected, that every girl has her price. Even amongst the Christian communion, it is impossible at once to eradicate the conception, which has the prestige of centuries, that a marriageable girl is simply to be purchased like any other marketable commodity. Through the matrimonial agent, the bridegroom's parents usually make the purchase; on the other hand, it is the bride's nearest male relative who disposes of her. The bridegroom does not see the lady until she arrives in a red sedan-chair, closely secured, at his house. From this he must, according to etiquette, receive her, however much imposture may have been practised as to her physical attractiveness, the quality which alone is looked to in these contracts. Only now and again is the bridegroom man enough to repudiate the transaction his relatives have made in

his behalf, as the Emperor seems to do in regard to the bride his mother ordained for him. Now and again, on the other hand, the woman discovers that she is to be mated to some moral and physical wreck, and makes her resistance. The tendency of Christianity is to make such resistance effective. In the main, however, the woman's part is to show a mild acquiescence in the proceedings, proof of which is furnished by the enjoined silence and inaction at the marriage-feast, where they even feed her.

Now all that Christianity can insist upon, is that cases of

MARRIAGE WORSHIP OF ANCESTRAL TABLETS.

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betrothal shall be referred to the Church, and that where there is a Christian community, from which selection is possible, no betrothal between Christians and heathens shall be permitted. Upon no other basis could the life of the Christian community be maintained. It is no persecution or ostracism of the heathen that is intended, but a matter of life and death for the Christian communities themselves. The family, after all, figures as a more prominent factor in the problem of evangelisation than is commonly realised; and the whole tendency of Christian work in China for years has been to deal with the family life of

Christians as Paul dealt when he wrote of "the church in thy house."

It was at the very fundamental principle of Christian society that Ki, in her need and in her anger, resolved to strike. There was Ang-tso, now grown to sixteen or seventeen years of age. Was she not marketable? Her daughter indeed she was, by every consideration of Chinese ethics, for China knows no difference between the adopted child and one born in the family. Who was the native pastor to stand between her and her own? For centuries her people had done this same thing; and why should a mere upstart community, like that into which she had chanced to be brought, take upon itself to revolutionise every practice of China's social life? She would sell the child, and that without consulting the Church. It would grieve the pastor; so much the better. That he, young in years, and with the flavour of the Institute still about him, should be off-hand with her, of whom European missionaries had taken notice, and with whom they even yet corresponded! But stay, she could do more. The girl was marketable; but what if she sold to a heathen? The heathen pay best. Besides, there would be an exquisite aggravation of her offence if she let a heathen have the child whom already the pastor regarded as belonging to him in virtue of his office. She would show him that, in claiming to control the mother, he had thrown away what rights the community might have over the child.

And so the miserable transaction was carried through. The voluble hag, who bore the best business character as matrimonial agent in the place, was called in to advise, and was told to ply her vocation. The description of the bride-elect suffered nothing at her hands, and, what with truth and fiction, she soon found a husband for the poor girl. The customary presents passed; the papers were duly signed; the matrimonial agent was rewarded; and though the bride, in China fashion, still tarried with the unnatural mother, this worse than Virginian bondage was effected. Then, and not till then, did Ki realise what she had done.

Not that meanwhile the Church had been idle. Hardly had the marriage agent been sent for before the minds of some of Ki's fellow-members were deeply stirred. The causes of the extreme watchfulness of the Christian community have to be sought for far back in Chinese nature and habits. The most gossiping English village gives but a poor approximation to the interest in other people's affairs which in China is shown in village and town alike. There people not only talk about you, but want to know a good deal more about you than they say. No heathen Chinaman ever thinks of trusting his fellow. In a Chinese Christian no grace grows more slowly than the love which thinketh no evil; and the spectacle of a community in which something like confidence is beginning to display itself is a standing puzzle to the heathen mind. The result of this universal distrust is a mental alertness and a keenness of scrutiny, lest the actions of another should by any chance affect your own interest. A Christian Church with such surroundings becomes to a large extent a self-protection society, in which the eyes of each member are bent upon his fellow's public and private life, not in mere curiosity or in malice, but because the risk of deceit and betrayal is so enormous. The very heathen, too, knowing the ideal of purity which Christians have before them, are soon ready with their taunts if inconsistency comes before them; and this naturally makes the Churches, for the sake of their own honour, doubly watchful as to the behaviour of the individual member. Tempered as it is by the influence of the European missionary, who often has to act as the champion of the weak when unconsciously fellow-Christians are about to inflict a wrong, Church discipline in China is extremely severe.

Even before discipline begins, the offender is "dealt with" in an unofficial fashion by friends and neighbours to an extent for which Western life hardly furnishes an equivalent. Some of Ki's neighbours spoke first—or rather tried to; but her temper was such that she simply would not hear them. The short walk to and from the residence of the lady whom she

was teaching brought her into contact with a good many who knew her as a Christian ; she felt, almost without knowing why, that as she passed them they were talking about her. Now and again she met a fellow-member; sometimes she would avoid conversation, and sometimes she would try to brazen it out with her forced gaiety. One sweltering August afternoon, when she had come back from her teaching, tired and ill at ease, a Bible-woman, an experienced old Christian, good at heart rather than wise in head, whom Ki respected and even loved for her kindly ways, came in upon her. Ki had never treated her, or, for the matter of that, anybody else since she had become a Christian, as she treated her that afternoon. Her first question was, "Who sent you?" And she refused altogether to believe, even when most distinctly assured to the contrary, that this was not a ruse of the pastor. She taunted the poor old dame with being the pastor's jackal: "Let him come himself if he wants to remonstrate with me, and I 'll show that I am a match for him." In vain the Bible-woman modestly pleaded that perhaps this was a matter in which a woman might speak to a woman both plainly and tenderly; that to marry her daughter to a heathen was preposterous in itself, and would wreck her own character in the Church. Venturing even on entreaty, she reminded the infatuated Ki of the horrors that must await the girl if she became the mere chattel of a heathen, over whom all the heathen relatives would domineer. All in vain. She insisted upon her right to do what she liked with her own, and the Bible-woman's visit had no other effect than making her more anxious that the betrothal should speedily be followed by the bridegroom sending for the girl.

The inevitable visit of the pastor was like throwing fuel on the flames. It came just after the betrothal was fully known. He might have been there before, and, whether his remonstrances had been heeded or not, he would at least not have had to meet the enormous inertia of Chinese custom. It was an almost unheard-of thing that the betrothal should be set aside.

And perhaps the way in which he went about his task was not the best that might have been devised. He failed to see that perhaps his own lack of the *suaviter in modo* when he declined to help her on the former occasion had led to the present complication; and he was cold, severe, even haughty. On her side, both words and actions were as different as possible from those to the Bible-woman. She was frigidly polite. She had not unlearnt all at once the life-long lessons of the mission school, and the official respect for the *bok-su* still lasted. But she was as defiant as ever. Beneath her studied politeness, it was not difficult to detect her pride, partly feminine, and partly national, in having behind her the whole weight of Chinese custom. For once that heathen China, which for all her life she had been taught to detest—its miserable treatment of women, its eagerness to pronounce a woman's bondage irrevocable—was on her side. Adversity makes strange friends; but better to-day this wild, defiant alliance with heathenism and its ways than any compromise with the young spiritual guide whom she has set at naught and outwitted at every turn of the argument—for she was clever enough to argue, and that right well. The pastor got the worst of it; and the only thing that was lacking to make her triumph complete, was that he should acknowledge himself beaten and take his departure. She quite forgot that behind him was the Church, against whose law she had offended, and with which she must now reckon.

Discipline could of course be delayed no longer. Two deacons saw her, urging her to withdraw from her false position by nullifying the betrothal; nothing else could save her from being denied the privileges of a Christian. She met them, hearing all they had to say, asking time to consider it, and meanwhile quietly going on with the preparations for the marriage. A second interview failed to secure the promise from her that the thing should come to an end. Then she was summoned to appear before the whole body of deacons and pastors in the town. It was not a case in which the slightest semblance of favouritism could be allowed. Her opportunities

had been so many. She knew so much better the universal practice, and the need of precaution in regard to marriages, that she must be treated as one who had defied the whole social code of the new community. Trying as it may seem for a woman to appear on her defence before such a body, the size and ability of it, to say nothing of the Christian courtesy and forbearance in the members, were all in her favour; besides, everything had to be reported to the Church, for it finally to adjudicate upon the case. Such deacons' meetings in cases of discipline familiarise the mind of the Christian community with a really impartial and just tribunal, which, while satisfying the national craving for official arbitration, stand in marked contrast with the corruption and delay of the secular courts. Toilsome and difficult as is the administration of a Church on such lines, and severe as was this present strain upon the Church machinery, it cannot be forgotten that *such proceedings go far to make and establish that public opinion in the country, without which its moral regeneration is impossible.* It hardly occurred to Ki to challenge the right of the representatives of the Church to call upon her to answer for her conduct; while, on the other hand, she little knew the mass and weight of the Christian rectitude which she had called into activity.

Yield she must eventually, or bid farewell to all the surroundings of an honourable Christian fellowship; as an opium-smoker once put it in similar circumstances, "I must either give up my opium, or clear out of this."

She owned to the facts—she could do nothing else. She declined to express contrition. Forthwith, by the unanimous vote of the Church, she was forbidden to present herself at the Lord's Table. At every communion season she felt anew how untenable was her position; but as the logic of the case became plainer to her, her irritation passed into wanton anger. More than once it seemed as though the greater excommunication were imminent, and as if she must be denied all fellowship whatever.

Just when her contumacy was at its height came that

awkward upheaval of conscience, when, in bitterness of spirit, she reviewed her own married life, and asked herself the question, "Is this all that home means?" It was when her cup of misery seemed full that salvation—the salvation from her worst self—came for her. She had never ceased to attend the services at chapel, even though she knew the grief she had been to the best of the worshippers there. Others might have broken off; she could not. There was no heathen circle of acquaintance waiting for her to come to it. All she knew and loved best, and all, she shrewdly suspected, who really loved her, were gathered there. In a moment when her spirit was softening the right word happened to be spoken from the pulpit by the European missionary. There was a short, sharp struggle with herself; and the next day the following letter from her came to Mr Sadler:—

"My Honoured Teacher,—I salute you, and thank you for your kindness and consideration. I want to tell you my trouble. On Sunday morning I heard you preach; you said people should be right with God. You added that there were those in the church whose conduct filled missionaries, pastors, and deacons with distress. It went to my heart. I asked myself, 'Am I right with God?' I answered, 'No.' I remembered how I disposed of my daughter to a man outside of the church, how I have many foolish notions, and a proud, covetous spirit. I have been very wilful. To-day I have been thinking of my sin, and I see it is truly great; if I should speak of it there would be no end. At first I deceived myself, but I see my fault now: that although I do revere Jesus, my heart is not fervent. I am neither cold nor hot. And I remember that Christ rejects such. After all my respect for missionaries, I see the distress I have occasioned you. Although I have a little love for my fellow-men, I do not understand how to love their souls. But in my error I mean to ask for the help of the Holy Spirit, and I pray God to forgive my great sin. Also I wish to ask the missionaries, and all the brethren and sisters, to entreat God that I may be forgiven. Never before did I know so well the Saviour's great

love and forbearance. Jesus says, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' My wish is to constantly remember the love of Christ, and thus rebuke my impiety and ingratitude. I venture to ask the missionaries and all the brethren and deacons, for Christ's sake, to forgive me."

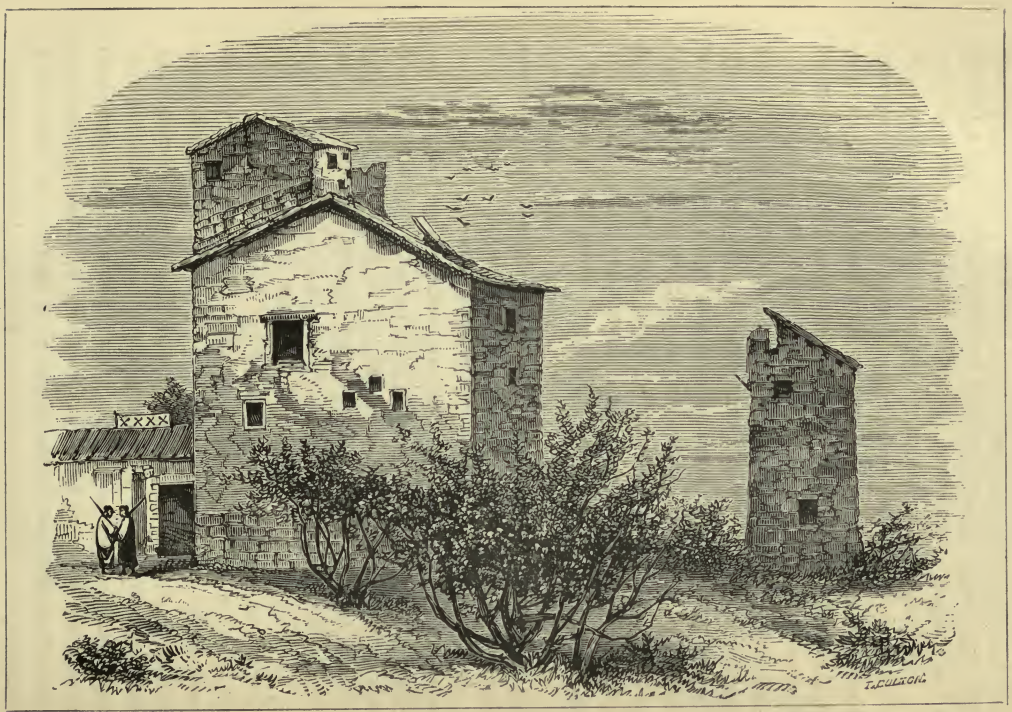
There was but one answer to such a request. She was restored; and even before that, in the gladness of penitence, she devised the plan of bringing her son-in-law and his wife from their heathen associations into her own neighbourhood. She cheerfully undertook to bear expense, and petitioned that the young man might be admitted under a special arrangement, though still a heathen, to our middle school. She thus did her best to prevent another disappointed wife having to ask her own bitter question—"Is this all that home means?"

CHAPTER VIII.

A CONVERT.

KIM, the thief, is a person of distinction. He won, and proudly carried, the title we have appended to his name, even in a nation where thieving abounds. He has had his ups and downs. Belonging to a powerful family, and with youth on his side, he tried military life; but whether they drummed him out for some slipperiness, or whether he was too smart by half for the martinets in command, the narrator knoweth not. But he secured what nurse-girls regard as the first qualification in a soldier—a certain fierceness and dash of bearing; and though a Chinese military life has no close counterpart to the comparatively harmless diversions of our gallant defenders on summer afternoons in the parks, Kim found his own circle to attract and dazzle. He dressed well, carried himself as if he ruled a province, made the most of his good looks, declined to settle down to work, and altogether conducted himself uncommonly like our young men about town.

Then came opium with its consequences. He did not dress quite so well, although he kept his long coat, in China the sign of the gentleman. The step, once so light and jaunty, became a trifle unsteady. When people saw him, they shook their heads; he was on the down-grade of Chinese life, and his neighbours—for Chinamen watch one another like detectives—were not slow to mark it. His little estate, which promised him the means of continued self-indulgence, became specially



By permission of the] CHINESE WATCH-TOWER. [*London Missionary Society.*

attractive to him. He had never given half so much attention to it, when he thought of it simply as a possession, as he now devoted to it, when it began to exert over his mind the strange fascination of something which might be speedily converted into money. Only his wife's diplomacy—a wife's diplomacy is something in China, especially when she sees her husband slipping down—prevented his selling. For all that, he became simply reckless. There were the usual family jars through his hopeless improvidence. What matter if his wife was crusty, and her relatives as fierce as he was wont to be himself in earlier days, there was always the circle of his boon companions ready with a welcome for him. Then, if he was poor, was not China rich? And if he had no reason for guarding with special care the money-bag, which the Chinaman carries, like the Highland sporran, slung round his waist, because his was almost empty, were not men passing by whose bags were heavier? For Kim the awkward and petty distinction between *meum* and *tuum* vanished. He simply drew on the community for what he wanted.

He was by no means particular. If money did not come his way, fowls might; and many were the unhappy roosters that were misled by his little habit of spitting on the ground in front of him, and found their misguided curiosity rewarded by being grabbed by the neck, and stowed away beneath his clothes. How very convenient is a gentleman's coat, after all! But for a man of his genius, any coat whatever, even though of the prodigious size of the Chinese gentleman, meant restriction and limitation. If the coat which covered his ingenious person was valuable for purposes of concealment, why should not these garments which are usually constructed for a pair of legs be made to hold something more? Cotton cloth was cheap, and to him, at least, other people's poultry were dear. So he got to himself a pair of pantaloons, in comparison with which the outsizes of the tailors' shops are the veriest knickers. A grave and reputable Chinaman, giving an account of the business in writing, once averred that these triumphs of sartorial skill were

eighteen feet long. He may, perhaps, have been thinking of the little feet of his countrywomen, but anyhow the pantaloons must have been long ones. They were intended for at least double duty. Not, indeed, that Kim, like schoolboys expecting a caning, was turning Protectionist; all the protection he sought was for the miscellaneous property he was in the habit of making his own by the simple process of transfer. It was the old Customs' dodge of the double petticoat, only multiplied by two, and with a lithe, supple Chinaman inside.

What should genius do with long pantaloons save turn them up? Why should a gentleman be compelled to carry poultry about before everybody's gaze? The turned-up trousers were as good as sacks; they were a splendid blend of decency and capacity. Into their deep recesses would disappear the contents of a whole hen-house—not the eggs, but their manufacturers.

An unappreciative public sometimes caught Kim in the act. No blush of vulgar shame suffused his gentlemanly countenance: he left such marks of weakness to rogues of meaner mould. If you rated him, his magnificent air left you a little ashamed of yourself for having spoken to a gentleman without an introduction. Nor, if you were wise, would you attempt to chastise him. He belonged to a powerful clan; and was he not the gentleman thief of the clan, whose indignities might be promptly avenged by some admiring kinsman? Besides, there were ugly stories afloat of how this Spring-heeled Jack had shown himself vindictive when meddled with. His position became recognised. It was that of a chief of banditti in Sicily, who simply helps himself to what he wants. Inside and out of his native city he was regarded with respect, though certainly not with love. The happy owner of an empty hen-house might feel bad when he met Kim in the street, but what were these little frailties of human temper to one absorbed in such a work of ingathering?

It is as risky for a practitioner to go amongst strange patients as it is for a prophet to address himself to his own countrymen.

One of Kim's narrowest escapes, when he carried his very life in his hands, or rather in his feet—for he had to take to his heels—resulted from his making this little mistake. He went as a stranger amongst strangers; and stranger as he was, he could see the skill of the inhabitants in fattening the savoury goose. A goose came near him. He was a goose to touch it; but he was hungry, and he did. Then began the fun. Whether that goose's neck was tougher than usual, or whether her notes were more plaintive as she bade farewell to the upper air, and disappeared in those gigantic pockets, history fails to relate. But the populace anyhow sprang to arms for the defence of its Christmas dinner, and unappreciated genius had to flee. They raised their hue and cry; the goose-stealer had taken such and such a road, dressed in the tattered costume of a broken-down gentleman. Kim saw his danger. He even heard them shouting about the long-coated thief. Gentility, as much as geese, threatened to be his ruin. At this moment he came in sight of safety. All unconscious, a fortune-teller, who also, as a member of the rag-tag-and-bob-tail, finds it expedient to wear the long-tailed coat, was travelling just in front of him. That was enough for Kim. Dodging aside into a garden, he threw away his own long-tailed coat; and, letting his pursuers pass him, he saw them seize the unhappy fortune-teller, and begin to ask him pointed questions about his liking for goose. Only the absence of the bird, a rather material witness, saved the fortune-teller from disaster. But Kim got off anyhow with a whole skin.

Even this chronic thief became one of the fruits of mission work. A preacher had one day taken his stand near Kim's home, and was delivering his message. Kim was lounging about, externally in tatters, and miserable in spirit. All of a sudden he looked up full in the preacher's face, and said, "I want to worship God, and give up opium; may I?" Though full of sympathy with him, because of his wretched appearance, the preacher, remembering the man's bad name, and thinking it was mere mockery, and sharing perhaps in Chinese hopelessness

regarding the lapsed, gave him no answer. But the method of intercession by relatives, which seems so roundabout to us, was employed. Kim's wife showed the same ingenuity that had in brighter days saved the land. Her nephew was a Christian, and she sent him to the preacher, with a request that he would cure her husband of his craving for opium. It was indeed a large order. The preacher sent for Kim, and he came. He was positive in his assurance that he desired to give up opium. "Then," said the preacher, "you must agree to my four conditions: first, that you must live in my chapel, and not dare to go out till you are cured; you are not even to cross the threshold without my permission, lest your craving should lead you away; your very food must be brought to you. Next, you must put on decent clothes, so as not to spoil the good name of the church. Thirdly, if anything is lost while you are with us, your family must make it good; and lastly, if you rob outside people any more, and they come to complain, I shall have to hand you right over to the mandarins for punishment." Kim readily agreed to the conditions, whereupon he was admitted to the chapel, both for the opium cure and to hear the Gospel.

There was building then going on—a new chapel was rising; and as Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do, Kim was set to work. His pay at first was the munificent sum of twenty cash a day—less than a penny. When he showed himself worth more, he got it, until he was drawing sixty cash, or twopence halfpenny, a day. But he never complained about the small pay. As he gradually overcame the desire for the opium pipe, he was permitted to take his meals at home. He made a domestic sensation in his own home on his first return. While he was saying grace, the children looked on with wonder, thinking it was some process of incantation. The wife was called, and she was puzzled. If he was cured of his opium crave, as he seemed to be, why on earth should he pray?

The idea of gratitude never seemed to have entered into her mind. The nation, which had originally no place in its language for "Thank you," is never in a hurry to render grateful service

to God; it vows and pays, and there the matter ends. But with Kim the thing went deeper. "I was giving thanks to God for the food; why do you interrupt me? Don't you understand?"

The evidence of change in his whole behaviour became most marked. He was, it must be owned, never quite the same man when the personal influence of the preacher who had rescued him was for a time withdrawn; slight lapses there may even have been, and who could wonder? But the whole life of the man is so different from that of the audacious thief of bygone days that one of his fellow-countrymen, referring to the influence he now exerts, has said, "A hundred ordinary men coming under the power of the Gospel are worth less than victory in this one case."

CHAPTER IX.

A Reformer.

"TAKE that, sir, and get out of this." So spake a sturdy chair-bearer to a young Chinese boy, named Chhun. The boy had watched with awe the dignified procession of the mandarin. He had thought, "I should like to take a seat in his chair of state," and when the seat was vacant by the departure of the great man, Chhun soon occupied it. A box of the ear brought him to his senses, but he had gratified the feeling of aspiration, which was to be displayed in later years.

A young Chinaman of the literary class is a model of pride, and can readily adopt the supercilious air of the class to which he belongs. Chhun's father being a Christian, it was natural for a missionary to visit at the house; but Chhun was not to be taken in by the "foreign superstition." He met the missionary's advances by contempt. The missionary was the Rev. J. Stronach, a Scotchman, trained at Glasgow University, and quite equal to cope with any young Chinaman. He smiled in such a way that young Chhun was stung; and to the idea that Chinese did not need aid from foreigners, the missionary replied with wit and wisdom from the Classics, to this effect—"Do not imagine that there are no gems in mountains outside of China." Chhun was roused to interest and attention. He accepted a copy of the New Testament, and read it day and night, not being able to stop, through the feelings which stirred and grew within him. New convictions formed in his mind. He had found

the Truth. Being a man of decision, he accepted it with all his heart, and has continued to follow it during the many years which have passed. The Word of God indeed proved to be a power.

The literary ability of Chhun came into good service. It was his effort to put Christian truth into Chinese forms. The best word for "God" has for long years been a matter of consideration amongst missionaries in China. Chhun took part in the discussion. Arguing from the Classics, he took the word "Thian" (Heaven), and showed how its use had been such as to prove it to be the term needed. Many of his Chinese fellow-Christians were led to accept his view. This is to be seen in the inscriptions over some chapels—"*Halls of* HEAVENLY *Doctrine.*" It is believed that if this term is used the Chinese will more readily understand that the God of the Christians is indeed the God who all along has been known, to some extent, in China.

The influence of Chhun has been increased by his extraordinary benevolence. He has long taken a most prominent part in the self-support movement, by which the London mission at Amoy has spread the Gospel far and wide inland. His support to the native ministry, to incidental expenses, and in chapel-building, has made him a marked man. He has stood out prominently in *business* life. It is said of him by a well-known Scotch merchant, with whose firm he is connected, "We can trust him as one of ourselves." He is held up to young Chinese as a model of faithfulness in business, so remarkable that "if he had been a heathen he would be deified as the god of the tea-planters." The meaning of this is that he has taken a leading part in the development of a famous industry in Oolong tea, for which Formosa is a chief centre.

Chhun has sought to reform some of the customs of family life bearing on betrothals and domestic slavery. He tried to marry his son into a family of earnest though poor Christians; and to arrange the marriage without the odious tricks carried on by matrimonial agents. So far the old customs are hard to alter. Chhun has not agreed with those who wish at once to

do away with domestic slavery. His dealing with the young girls, purchased by request and brought into his family as the usual servants, is nothing but kind and good. He only detains them in service till they are of marriageable age, and then arranges for their settlement in life.

Chhun was a refugee from Formosa in the time of the Franco-Chinese War. He came into the study of the missionary one morning, when earnest consideration was going on as to how to reach the upper classes. It was during the New Year week of prayer, a time of great blessing in starting new efforts of usefulness. Our plan had been to visit those who could not appear in the general assemblies for preaching. Mr Chhun entered with great spirit and painstaking care into the matter. He said it must be understood how terribly ignorant and lethargic the minds of the upper classes were as to the nature and claims of Christianity. They mistook it for a gross superstition and prohibited sect, such as had caused grievous trouble in China. They could not be brought to perceive its importance by present methods. He went on to explain that public opinion on religion was mostly influenced by those in authority, that vast numbers of the gentry and learned did not know Christianity to be legal, and would thus not think themselves at liberty to give it attention. Then too, he said, it must be remembered that the higher a man's position, the more bitter and wide-spread the opposition to innovation. With all the strength of his mind and heart he spoke, and subsequently wrote, to show how it was of supreme importance that Christians in high places should, in friendly ways, point out to the great in China the lawfulness and blessedness of the Christian religion. He seemed to be possessed by concern for his suffering brethren, the native Christians, and addressed a pamphlet to Western Christendom, pleading that the question should receive thought and care. He was willing, he told the missionary, to spend a good deal of money on this matter of setting before friends, specially in Britain, the great facts as to the status, or want of status, of Christians in China. Could he but have been brought

into contact with some powerful writer of English, he could state facts which might startle and impress us as to the real conditions of mission life and work in China. In the words of a British Minister of State, to whom the missionary explained the matter, "*Such a man is not to be disregarded.*" The prayer that Christians of the West, who possess power, learning, wealth, and earnestness, will look into this vast question of the regeneration of China, may wait long for answer; yet can we doubt that in due time the voice of the struggling Christians of China will be heard, and bring its fulfilment at least in the raising up of many a Moses and many a Paul to go out to China and serve in spreading the Kingdom of our Saviour?

CHAPTER X.

ANCESTOR WORSHIP.

A BRIGHT prospect of a useful life opened to Tsong. Great benefits had come to him from the establishment of Christianity in his neighbourhood. It had penetrated to his home. His own heart had been truly turned Godward, and he had joined the Church. He had many opportunities of self-improvement. His disposition was genial. His talents were fairly good; but his power of persistence against difficulties was not yet fully developed. And thus it was that, though he had advanced so far, and was liked so well, though he had even done service as a Christian, yet, becoming involved in personal and domestic entanglements, he was set aside from the good work to which he had given himself.

There is much of brotherly love amongst the native Christians. Foreign missionaries may hold different opinions as to the best way to deal with a delinquent in Christian service, whether to cut him off, or to go through a wearisome though paternal effort to call out the better nature. To the natives there is always the consideration that time does not press; and, spite of all faults, they are disposed to be easy-going toward an offender. It would be unnatural to expect a counterpart to our Western sense of responsibility. Anyhow, in Tsong's case they came to the foreign missionary, and proposed that the young man should take part in a new mission. Confidence, even in China, begets confidence. It is wonderfully inspiring there to

a man to be believed in. Tsong found his first incentive for a new start in this trust. The missionary took the responsibility of appointing him to an important station at Enghok.

It was another advantage to Tsong, whose health had run down, that the climate suited him. His mother, too, a woman of character and experience and influential goodness, arranged to remove to the station, taking with her Tsong's family. This was an unusual help, for this worthy mother was an accomplished Bible-woman, and could make her efforts tell widely. The sight, too, of a whole family thus gathered in a centre where family life is singularly honoured, and where idle stories had been circulated against the Christians for their want of filial piety, had a wonderfully good effect in allaying the prejudice of the people, and removing their suspicions. Tsong's work began to prosper. Many a home was opened to his visits, and those of his mother. Friendships were formed. Multitudes of the inhabitants heard the Gospel. Some were satisfied that Christianity meant good. Some even were prepared to enter the inquirers' class, thence to cast in their lot with the people of God, come what might. The new society was gaining a footing in the neighbourhood. But, as usual, it was to be made perfect through suffering, in which Tsong was to have his full share as head of the new community; and he soon gave full proof that his fall from Christian service was but temporary, and that he had learned wisdom by the things which he suffered.

It was no little strength he needed to stand during the trials connected with obtaining a chapel. Ere Tsong had come, when work was just beginning, it seemed as though heaven had opened. The missionary and his companion were actually invited to occupy the ancestral hall, sleeping in the small rooms at the side of the main building, and having the central accommodation for receptions. Here we could preach the importance of worshipping our Father in heaven, as one from whom all earthly fathers had descended, and to whom they owed themselves and their offspring. There was no great trouble in our next step, securing for ourselves a poor broken-down house, the

dwelling-room of which was hard by a slaughter-house, whose sights and sounds could be had gratis ; while on another side were pig-sties. The roof had its little weakness, and leaked badly ; and, below, the mud floor was so wet, that we were glad to put charcoal under the trestle-bed, to dry up the moisture. Ere long, however, when Tsong came to the station, much better quarters were obtainable. But the better our position the more earnest our opponents. What might not happen ? A footing was being gained. A second story, too, might even be put up, and this would spoil the luck of the place ; so that, though many links with the people were formed, their sentiment was not such as would bear strain.

The hostility displayed was tentative, according to the true spirit of Chinese subtlety. It was not certain how far we should be befriended. There must be some power on our side, or we could hardly have come. Our agent in obtaining the house was a young man, well known for his skill in writing sacrificial odes suitable for the worship of ancestors. He, anyhow, had not yet broken with idolatry ; and it might not be wise to offend him. Besides, he was connected with a powerful family. It might be well to test his power to help the foreigner. So complaint was made to his superior, and apparently with success. Still, nothing was done.

But we were threatened from different quarters. Not only had the deeds been abstracted, so that our legal standing was only secured by an extraordinary effort on the part of the landlord ; we had also to contend against an old woman. Nor was she a mere scarecrow. In bygone days she had had some hold on the property ; how much or how little it beat our ingenuity to discover. But she now considered the opportunity favourable for levying blackmail—and very black it was. She told us that if we would not pay her she would destroy herself. "Do as you please," was our argument in the case. She knew quite well, and we too, that if she carried out her threat, we should be chargeable with her death. A small outcry of a country urchin as to his being ill-used by a foreigner, is enough,

when skilfully raised and echoed, to create a disturbance. What would occur if this venerable and desperate old lady should be found dead on our doorstep? The prospect was so trying that we had legal consultations with different authorities to avoid being taken unawares. Tsong, patient and careful in

By permission of the] ANCESTOR TABLET. [*London Missionary Society.*

his methods, was very helpful; and the excellent Bible-woman, his mother, aided him greatly in his difficult task of keeping peace.

Another feature of our trial was that an old ancestral tablet had been left in one part of the house. To have removed it

might have been more than our lives were worth. The revival of pious interest in the *manes* of that old ancestor was remarkable. No one can have been more astonished at his sudden popularity than himself. The worshippers insisted on the right of coming, at their own time, to carry on their ritual before the old slab. It was enough to make a whole board of directors feel bad. While it is obviously our duty to discountenance this form of heathenism, here we actually had it full blown under our very roof. Churches at home, inclined to iconoclastic edicts, should just have themselves laid finger on that tablet. Probably the employment of unlimited money would have opened a way for the removal of the antique gem; but we had not the money to spare, and, if we had, it would have been a bad precedent.

This question of ancestral worship, indeed, is a most serious one all round. In this neighbourhood we were in the very centre of it. The healthy atmosphere and quiet surroundings on the high table-land, had encouraged a flourishing population, part of which had spread in all directions, while multitudes remained, pictures of health and longevity truly pleasant to look on. The manners of the people are suave. Their scattered villages are attractive. Wooden bridges of considerable dimensions cross the stream. Ancestral halls appear like oriental palaces. Towering high over all else save the lordly mountains in imposing grandeur, are the pagodas. The people are proud of their country, and to it there return multitudes to do honour to the departed at the ancestral festivals. But they also enjoy themselves in every conceivable fashion. Though there are many things attractive in the worship of forefathers, it is full of objectionable features. Best things abused become the worst. Chinamen take no interest in the internal affairs of the lands they visit, except for selfish ends, in order that they may hurry back with their pile to China. The worship of ancestors seems to be by far the most important cause of this aloofness. Nay, even their own corpses must be returned to their fatherland, that divine honours may be paid to

them. Thus, apart from opium, and rice, and the labour problem, they justly come in for antipathy. Only of late in the West is it understood that men the world over form but one family. China is a long way from such an ideal.

But the evils of the cult at home are more serious. Covetousness comes in to back up the system, inasmuch as the tenure of property in the country is contingent on the due performance of the rites. Then, too, gross ideas of Nature are concentrated in the system—such as that the wants of the dead are purely material; that their heaven is not a glorified China, but the China of to-day, into which they re-enter. The agnosticism of Confucius regarding the details of a future life has been practically abandoned in China, and an incoherent Buddhism attempts to satisfy the heart's cravings. We have nothing to do with the logical consistency or otherwise of this process; it is enough for us that this so-called spirit-worship is essentially unspiritual. The spiritual nature of man is hopelessly obscured. Practically, too, it is bad for parents to be unduly magnified, and for children to cultivate filial piety from the point of view of personal pain. Add to all this, that in a district cut off so much from the outside world, horrible immoralities have been practised in connection with the very temples,—immoralities for which even a heathen code provides the severest penalties.

It was no wonder, therefore, that Tsong felt himself surrounded by difficulties; the wonder is he stood so well, and acted so wisely. Discretion seemed to him the better part of valour. This peculiar struggle against ancestral worship he carried on as far as he could, and left the rest to the missionary. He had gathered converts who renounced idolatry and superstition, but were not prepared for this greatest trial of their faith, the giving up of ancestral worship. These converts were handed over to the missionary. He gathered the inquirers together. They seemed worthy of membership on other grounds. But their attitude as to this evil was a poser. Their sentiments ran thus: "You can't alter this. We wish to be Christians, but the worship of our fathers must go on as usual. It may be of no

account to you. To us it is a law of life and nature." Arguments from Scripture as to such worship being due to God alone did not appear effective. The example of others who had broken from the spell did not tell. They sat there, a whole company, like an unbroken phalanx. At last the missionary, deeply stirred, attacked them on the immoralities of the system, in words both solemn and scathing. They saw how utterly material the worship often was, and grossly selfish; how the feasting of the body was the great matter, as the couplet says:—

"Si hau pak-to
M si hau tso."

("'Tis the worship of the stomach, not of forefathers.")

They saw how many cared really nothing for pious memories, and to follow the deeds of the departed. They were reminded of some of the unmentionable crimes against family life which had been tolerated in connection with this fetish of the family, and when these things were driven home on their consciences there was a wavering; their moral sense was aroused, and a new proof given of the power of conscience in despised Chinamen. They, like Tsong, had fallen from the higher ideals of the Christian life; but they were not utterly cast down. One of the inquirers, quivering with subdued excitement, dared to take the lead. "Ancestral worship," he declared, "must be given up." The others followed. In the afternoon a number of new members were added to Tsong's church.

It may be urged that the task of bringing these people to decision ought to have been Tsong's. Granted that possibly he is lacking in courage, yet a thousand estimable qualities entitle him to love and esteem. Besides, the moral difficulties of his position are enormous. The people of the neighbourhood are exceedingly polite, but exceedingly slippery. Deceit and treachery are carried sometimes to a great length. For instance, the story is told of a man who lived by his wits, and who approached a bachelor, and offered to provide him with a wife. Said the bachelor, "I have been disappointed once or twice,

and am now chary." "Oh," said this sharper, "I will see you right; and you shall not pay till you are pleased. I will show you the lady before you give me anything for my trouble." "Agreed." "Now," said the sharper, "come with me." So he took the bachelor down a road, and told him to wait. Then he rushed round a corner, and entered a house where he saw a young woman. She was alone, weaving. "I am pursued by a bailiff," he cried; "do let me hide a minute." Her ideas of propriety were shocked, and she was inclined to disbelieve him. Said he, "Go out and see for yourself." She went out, and saw the man, and he saw her. The end was gained. Soon the sharper rejoined the bachelor, coolly saying, "Well, you've seen her; will she do? She is such and such a relative, whom I have to dispose of." The agreement was made, and some money advanced for arranging matters, and preparing for the wedding. Said the sharper, "You need not give me more till you actually see the bride coming." Away went the sharper to his widowed mother, and said, "Mother, do not be angry with me any more. This time I will serve your interest. Such and such a gentleman wishes to marry you straight off. His house is magnificent. He has sent you this money for outfit." After considerable persuasion, the good woman took heart, decked herself, and entered the bridal chair. Then the sharper ran off ahead to the gentleman, and said, "Look out; you see the bride coming; now give me the rest of the money." As soon as the money was paid, off he ran. Then arrived the venerable bride, presenting herself as she had been told. Tableau! A terrible conflict, truly Chinese, ensued, before the series of mistakes could be cleared up. The woman had recourse to the usual stratagem, threatening to kill herself straight off, and leave the bachelor with his hands full. Of course he had to come to some terms. The tormenting son naturally kept out of the way; enough for him to get money for vicious indulgence.

Tricks only slightly less grotesque have been played in the very chapel where Tsong labours. It is needful for all the staff, both native and European, to be wise as serpents and

harmless as doves. But out of the trickery of native life, as well as the slime of native morals, the Christians are undoubtedly emerging. Those who know the work would be fools to be frightened by a few failures. But the Churches at home should have done with querulous complaints because the standard of rectitude is not yet that which seventeen centuries have established in Britain. The failures are the exception. Even where they are found, the cases are seldom examined without the cheering discovery that where sin has got the mastery conscience has been working. The Christian faith of Chinese converts is in the child stage. Some at home may even call Tsong, and Tan, and all the rest, puerile. But the question is really whether the child is healthy, and will live and grow. Unless heathen infanticide has made unexpected converts in England, there will be no attempt to strangle young Christian life in China. If there are any signs of possible vigour, be it ours to receive even weaklings, in the Master's name, to tend, and strengthen, and set about the very task that is theirs, and ours, and His.

CHAPTER XI.

Scenes by the Way.

A MISSIONARY'S experience is often marked by a variety of curious and startling incidents, showing such need of going about doing good as is calculated to excite sympathetic affections even in sluggish minds.

Specimens are given in this chapter.

RESCUING THE OPIUM VICTIM.

"Teacher, come quickly; here's a man who has swallowed opium-poison; see if you can save him." These words rung in my ears one day on arriving at one of our village stations inland, amongst the hills. I wish some of our friends from the House of Commons, who talk so glibly and laughingly about opium, could have been with me that morning, and seen the effect of a licence in vending the drug, such as they would be sorry to see in this country. The preacher and I immediately prepared some citrate of zinc, and started off with a messenger across a stream to the little village at the foot of the hill. No towering pagoda here, or handsome memorial arch, not even a mud boundary to the small cluster of dwellings. Yet human souls are precious here as elsewhere. Before us there lay stretched on a large bed one of the many victims of our Indian Revenue; a man well built, in his prime, but lying senseless. A female relative, with a child tied at her back, was moving about on the

great bedstead, trying to call him to his senses, and shake him out of the awful stupor. No Christian man or woman, whose heart is not dead, could help being affected by the scene. The poor fellow is open as much to our pity as to our blame. His trouble had been a family one. He had had charge of a nephew, who was now stolen from him. Repeated efforts to get justice done had failed. He had fallen back on his last resource, by killing himself, because in China when a man is driven to desperation, so as to kill himself, those who have angered him thus bitterly can be brought in as guilty for manslaughter. When we arrived, we found the people of the place trying to force open the man's teeth, and to pour down duck's blood, so as to make him vomit the opium. They were not succeeding. We began to dose him with citrate of zinc, but no effect seemed to follow. We returned to the chapel, and waited on from the middle of the day till eight o'clock in the evening. Inquiries were being made in different directions as to our success. We could not help some anxiety as to the result; but between eight and nine in the evening a messenger came to us, saying that the medicine had taken effect, and the man, though very weak, was now saved. Next morning we went again to see him, and found him prostrate but hopeful. The native preacher spoke to him in a very beautiful manner, advising him in case of future trouble to come to the chapel, and ease his mind by consultation and prayer. It was affecting to see the gratitude of these good people. They sent a formal invitation, on the fashionable red paper, inviting us to a feast. They wanted us to have a present. We declined their good offers, and tried to make them understand our motive of simple concern for their well-being.

Some forty opium suicides have been rescued at one of our stations after the deadly dose had been taken.

HEALING.

A wild son had brought himself to an utterly prostrate condition. He could not eat, or sleep, or speak. The father

came to ask our help. We set to work upon the young man, who lay in his bed like a log, on a ground floor, in a house largely built of wood. The Chinamen make capital patients, and before long our friend yielded to the medicine we gave him. Suitable food helped his recovery, and by and by he rallied, to the great joy of his father, who seemed to feel no little gratitude.

THE FAMILY.

It is pleasant to think how often the plainest help, even from a man who is not a doctor, goes a long way. I was one day at a chapel in the centre of my inland district. A husband came in to ask help for his sick wife. The preacher, who was near me, began to send the man away. I interposed, and said, "Let 's find out what is the matter ; perhaps we can help." The natives give credit to all of us foreigners for knowledge of medicine, so that, to say the least, there is the inspiration of faith. When the man had explained the circumstances of his wife's health, it was clear that what she needed was less work and more good food. He went away impressed with my advice on the matter. I will undertake to say that the more he carried out the instruction given him, the more cause for satisfaction the good woman would have.

TEMPLES.

I was going by a temple one night, and saw a figure crouching in the doorway. I inquired what was going on, and was told that the temple was to be opened, and prayer offered to know what medicine to give to a man dangerously ill. Soon the doors were opened, and the place was lighted up. The ugly god was visible, and the vulgar colours of his shrine. A company of village elders came together. The sorcerer arrived, and took his place on a chair in front of the idol. One of the men who stood round him took strips of paper, lighted them, and swung them round the sorcerer's head. At the same time a strange ditty was crooned over in a sing-song fashion, the meaning of

which was an invocation to the spirit of the god to enter into the sorcerer, and show him what medicine should be used to cure the sick man. Gradually the sorcerer shook. The quivering of his body went on more and more, as if he were being carried beyond himself. Soon he brought his hand down with a thud on the table, and jerked out a Chinese word, and again another, as "Kun," "long." A man was sitting at the end of a table, with Chinese pencil and paper, taking note of each word uttered. By and by there was silence. Then the man was to be unmesmerised. This was done by one of the leaders taking a mouthful of water and squirting it into the face of the sorcerer. Now the question was, What about the recipe? It would astonish people in this country to know what the Chinese use for medicine. They will come into our houses and ask for cockroaches. We reply, "Yes, what do you want them for?" The answer is, "To make medicine." When allowed to hunt up the cockroaches, they break their backs in two, and soon have them in the boiling pot. They will come into the garden and ask for certain leaves or other vegetable matter likewise for medicine. Curious compounds of ducks' blood, herbs, and so forth, are all used. The sorcerer was not a doctor, and the words he jerked out were just such as occurred to him in his excited state. What shall we say of all this? Shall we leave them alone, or shall we hasten to give the needed help? Multitudes are perishing through pure ignorance.

HOSPITALS.

It is difficult to over-estimate the value of hospital work. Any one must admit that a man who is in pain, or even depressed by the wide-spread complaint of anæmia, cannot attend to the choicest message made known by the ablest preacher. As the Chinaman has not specially cultivated the power of the mind over the body, his physical nature has an influence over the soul to an alarming extent. There is boundless suffering through inadvertence, as well as through vice and passion.

The people can be touched very deeply when they are cured of disease, and relieved from pain. Again, it may be said, how even laymen can render good, faithful service. I remember how a father was touched simply because help had been given to his son in getting up strength. The lad had been terribly weakened. It was necessary he should have some good beef-tea and nourishing food. This we gave him, and forgot all about it. But during years that elapsed the subject was again and again referred to. "You were kind to my boy in that illness." So spake the burly father, not by any means an attractive man outwardly, yet proving himself to be remarkable for family affection, and possessed of undying gratitude.

I once went to our hospital in time of pestilence. The house-surgeon warned me against entering. I got permission from the European doctor, and asked what I could do to assist? He directed that I should attend to sanitary matters. There was need enough! Insanitary and plague-spreading manure was being allowed to remain on the premises without any regard to the fact that all the work of all the best doctors in the world would be nullified if such conditions were not removed. What would England be without its hospitals? Fancy all the patients of all our hospitals left to perish from neglect. Think of a hundred Londons, and scarcely any hospitals. Some three years ago, sixteen thousand persons perished from cholera in one city, near Amoy. It is customary, in such circumstances, for the people to have night processions. The noise created by the tramping, the shouting, the beating of gongs, and the endless firing off of crackers; also the flashing of torches, and all this in connection with the oppressive heat and the sense of peril to life, gives one the idea of pandemonium. It is still more affecting to know that the mandarins, who are called the parents of the people, in that time of wide-spread calamity to which we refer, were not prepared to welcome the benefits of Western healing, though at their wits' end to know what to do to help the distressed. One plan they tried was the firing off of cannon, in order to blow away the ghosts of disease. Another plan was

to send for a famous idol, that his ghostly energy might be brought to bear against the epidemic. Another plan was, when it was too late, to order the cleansing of the city; and yet one more plan was to put out a proclamation, telling the people to be good, and pacify heaven. O the sorrows of that weary time, and the consternation! Only the Christians knew anything of calm, avoiding the follies of idolatry, and having immediate recourse to useful remedies, while their minds were quieted by prayer. One of our native ministers cured as many as a hundred by native remedies alone. Various efforts were made to help. Still the pestilence did fearful work. The wailing over the dead became so common that orders were given to stop it, lest the hearts of survivors should entirely fail. Medicine was distributed largely. Still the havoc spread. When wood was used up for coffins, mats were brought to surround the corpses, and then even straw. In so many ways men suffer and die through need of help. *It is only distance which makes the misery of the world bearable.* Will we, as Christ, take men's infirmities, and bear their sicknesses?

IMPORTANCE OF HOPEFULNESS.

"Do you see that plot of ground? A young fellow was buried alive there. His parents were hopeless as to his being anything but a disgrace and burden to them; so they took him out, dug a hole in the cold earth, put him in, and buried him. A companion of his was hiding in the hedge, and as soon as the parents had gone, he came forward, and tore up the body out of the earth, before the breath was out of it. It was arranged that the youth should go abroad. There he became a new man; and when eventually he returned home, it seemed to the parents as though the dead had come to life again."

This is a literal translation of an account given me by one of our native brethren as we walked over the public burying-place. It may be questioned, Could such hopelessness exist? and could the young man be so inactive in his own defence? Answer

may be given by referring to another case of burying alive, in which a youth himself importuned an elder brother till his request for burial was granted, so that his weariness of life might end. Relatives hurried to the grave when it was too late. Heathenism is strongly marked by hopelessness. Enlightment and relief are the more appreciated as they are understood.

AVOIDANCE OF SUPERSTITION.

Two children were playing beside a stream; one, a boy, fell in; the other, his sister, went in to try to save him. Both were drowned. There were many onlookers, who, however, did nothing to help. Why? Because there is a superstition which says that if a person is drowning, it means that a ghost is dragging him down. If you attempt to save the drowning one, the ghost will seize you. Therefore, to save yourself, do not meddle with the drowning. Such superstitions vanish under the light of truth as mists before the morning.

DOING RIGHT AT ALL COSTS.

Thianlai was born in Central China. His parents died. His brother sold him to a man at Shanghai. Down the Yangtse went the youthful traveller. But he could not succeed in Shanghai, and so made his way down the coast to Amoy. Here he entered into an engagement as a play-actor. The out-door theatre is a most popular institution in China. City, and even village, life is not complete without it. It is one of the chief embellishments of idol temples. Rudyard Kipling, in his book entitled *In Black and White*, has powerfully depicted Oriental passions of revenge, barefaced lying, treachery, immorality, and wild outbreaks in domestic and public life. All such subjects find eager listeners and watchers at the Chinese play. A clever actor can make much money. So it was with Thianlai. He came, however, under a new influence. A Christian teacher instructed him in the new faith, taught

him to pray, and warned him against the mischiefs of the play, which, even from a Chinese point of view, is disreputable. Our friend carried on his employment, while his mind was also occupied with higher things. One day, as he acted the part of a prime minister making an appeal to the emperor, he forgot his part in his thought of kneeling to a Greater Being. His heart said, "O God, I am not kneeling to this man, but to Thee." He was blamed by the manager of the theatre, and he went on with the plot. Soon after, he saw another actor in the act of prayer, and extorted from him the confession that he was a Christian in search of an absent relative, and finding it necessary to have recourse to acting in order to secure maintenance. Here, amid all the extraordinary surroundings of vulgar amusements, were two men feeling after God. Soon Thianlai saw the teacher again, who said to him, "Are you serving God faithfully? Have you discontinued your illicit employment?" He replied, "How else can I provide for my wife and family?" The reply was, "What if you were to die?" Soon after this Thianlai was again on the stage, and this time as a woman, according to the custom that, as women are not allowed to act, men personate them. Thianlai represented a wife who professed all faithfulness to her husband. He died. Three days after she married again, and took the brains of the first husband to give to the second to make medicine. Thianlai was uncomfortable in such degrading associations, and wished to be rid of his occupation. He was put in the way of a livelihood by selling medicine. But the manager of the theatre met him, and gave him the tempting offer of thirty dollars a month if he would return. This was a great inducement, and Thianlai asked for time to think over it. He went home under the power of temptation. There was a conflict between flesh and spirit. He became ill, and questioned how his sickness would end. Friends pressed their inquiries till they learned the facts of the case, and then they caused the storm within him to become more terrible as they exclaimed, "You are like Judas. Judas sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver, and you for thirty dollars a

month." The agony of soul was at length resolved in a life-long determination to give up the lucrative play-acting. Now, however, began a life-long conflict with self-interest, and with heathen relatives. This has been carried on twenty-eight years, until recently, when Thianlai went home. To the last he showed his consistency by faithfully witnessing for God, and charging his relatives not to bury him as a heathen.

Here was something more severe than a general opposition to the dreaded deities of the country. After all, the first question with a Chinaman is how to subsist. Thianlai learned to say, "*Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.*"

CHAPTER XII.

"Come over and help us."

MISSIONARY information is sometimes looked at from the point of view of romantic interest. There can be no objection to the exercise of taste and pleasure in the study of the many strange things connected with the countries and the people who are visited when our Saviour's command to preach the Gospel to the whole creation is carried out. And yet permission may be given to plead with the readers of the preceding pages that their interest in the Chinese may not be of a casual or superficial kind. It may not be permitted to returned missionaries to delineate all the most terrible features of heathenism in order to show the deep need of the Gospel. And yet opportunity must be given to point out in how many ways that need is brought pressingly home to us, so as to let the call for help be ever pealing in our ears, and moving our hearts. I once heard an earnest Chinaman explaining to a native audience one view of the words at the head of this chapter, viz., that it was the Lord Jesus Himself, appearing as one who needed the Gospel, and asking for help. Certainly all Scripture warrants us in seeing Christ in the needy ones, and in understanding that by serving them we serve Him.

A story is told of an elderly lady, who, having heard Dr Dale preach a remarkable missionary sermon, said, "Well, if the Gospel can make a heathen into a man like that, I will certainly support it." It is open to us to plead that if the Gospel can raise up such men as those whose portraits have been given in

this volume, it should be supported. In them we have an inspiration of hope as to what can be done for China. Such inspiration may be intelligently spread by all true friends, so that whenever there is a fear lest it should be impossible to overcome the prejudices of the native mind, and bring a people so hard to impress into the Kingdom of Christ, hopes such as those raised above may take the place of despondency, as we thank God and take courage in the raising up of bands of native leaders similar to those described.

Those who are willing to help by making themselves acquainted with China's deep need, and by spreading abroad such information, may direct attention to the intolerable woes from which she suffers. Wide-spread famines, from which millions have perished, happen periodically, because of the need of science and mutual good faith, so that great national improvements may be undertaken in order to prevent devastating floods, and in order to arrange for railways by which grain may be conveyed to the starving. Then fearful pestilences are constantly occurring through the ignorance of the laws of health, the pestilential uncleanliness of the cities, the frightful ignorance of medicine, and the want of common caution in guarding against infection. Ever and anon deadly warfare is breaking out, sometimes international, through the want of the knowledge of international law; while village wars are chronic. Fearful hatreds burn with volcanic fury, and men are so little acquainted with ways of hope and help that their own souls' life, as well as their treatment of one another, becomes desperate. If there could be any accurate statistics taken, the extent of self-destruction in the country would be seen to be fearful, and if the causes of unnatural mortality were duly considered even callous hearts would be affected. When the life of infant girls can be ruthlessly destroyed; when burial alive can be resorted to to put out of the way a vicious boy, and can even be pleaded for by a youth to whom life is become intolerable; when many perish through the want of ordinary comforts; when widows are honoured for committing suicide at the death of their husbands;

when violent wives can find ways for the disposal of their husbands; when slave-girls can be horribly treated; when there are the endless evils of polygamy—surely there is call enough for the compassion of Christian hearts. It is argued, indeed, that evils exist in every country. But what is really the case in Christian lands? Surely that, for every great evil, there is sooner or later an undying effort to provide a great remedy. On the other hand, heathenism is marked by wanton neglect, and an ever-increasing intensity of evil. In a country like China, the woes of prisoners and examination by torture do not find compassion. There is no great effort to create a public opinion against corruption in the law-courts. Monstrous moral evils do not cause alarm or call forth effective remedy. Those who perish in pilgrimages and in many ways connected with idols pass away without any public lament. Those who contend in deadly conflict over lucky graves, those who suffer through the superstitions as to devils, those whose lives are wrecked by bad marriage laws, those who are ruined by kidnapping, perish without any public concern for them. Fatalism is not easily rectified, and, apart from outside help, there is no effort to rectify it. What can cast out the evil spirits of human passion but the grace of that Saviour, which has appeared so wondrously in the progress of Christianity?

In pointing out the woes of heathenism as one line of reasoning to show the need of the Gospel, it has thus been shown that these woes are connected with SINS; but how distinctly should the Christian conscience realise that for any human being to be left in a state of sin, when it is possible to give them the Gospel, ought to be intolerable. Even in the midst of the evils of heathenism, it is proved to be possible to call up the sense of God, to impress the mind by the solemnity of His moral law, and to enable the conscience to assert itself. What more noble purpose can actuate us, who have known the majesty of Sinai and the mercy of Calvary, who have felt in our life the supremacy of the Christian Ideal, than that we, impelled by all the authority as well as the responsibility of our superior knowledge,

should so witness for God that the heathen mind may be gradually enkindled to love Him as we do ourselves. Surely there is a pathetic appeal to us in the fact that the heathen themselves are constantly engaged in many forms of lynch law, to say nothing of their more systematized efforts at legislation, to put down wrongdoing; and yet they fail to secure the rectitude they desire, and experience the deterioration of human life without the means of uplifting it.

If one more fact is needed to show the want of the Gospel, it is found in this: that the most superior men in the whole country constantly use their advantages for private and selfish ends, disdain the common people, and allow them miserably to perish. Confucianism, as revealed in the classics, has many points of merit, and its influence in the native life is not a little remarkable; yet those who will put the greatest honour upon this moral system will not be slow to acknowledge that it is without a knowledge of pardon of sin, so that a Confucianist will distinctly state that there is no hope for a bad man. It does not set itself to work to impress the people with a possibility of new life; it does not give hope in trouble, nor does it give an outlook after death. Let all these weighty considerations sink into our hearts. Yet we have farther to consider how, whatever strength Buddhism may have once had, it is now a system of weakness, immorality, and ignorance; while, as for the followers of Touism, they cannot be regarded otherwise than as the most debased spiritualists. The more the condition of China is looked into, the more it will be seen that individual, family, social, and national life is full of appeal to the Christian heart. In many ways even the proudest are being humbled, and if only the inspiration of hope lighted up the souls of those who hardened themselves the most, they, like Saul of Tarsus, would be subdued into submission to the Crucified. A missionary sees men writhing in remorse, without the hopes enkindled in this country. He knows how public life is allowed to deteriorate, when enlightenment might do its blessed work as in Western lands. He knows the want of moral courage everywhere felt, and that nothing is so hard to

develop, although in Christian work there is proof positive that it *can be* developed in the native mind. By all such considerations, condensed to the briefest possible space, there is given reason for realising China's great need of the Gospel.

Those who are willing may further help by taking advantage of the inestimable privilege of prayer. The mention of prayer may seem to some a mere commonplace, yet when we settle down to weighty and serious consideration the question comes—"Do we really pray?" and especially, "Do we pray for others?" To many a thoughtful missionary the question has come, "How was it that the apostle Paul had such an inspiration of hope concerning those to whom he preached the Gospel, and particularly concerning those whom he saw gathered into the early Christian Church?" It could not possibly be that the early Christians were angels, for in the epistles written by the glowing apostle he sharply indicates the greatest moral evils, and peremptorily demands that they shall be overcome; and yet he ever has before his mind's eye such brilliant possibilities of the converts that they are to him his joy and crown. Because he has them in his heart, therefore it is that he is able to love them into goodness. But this all-comprehensive affection is shown most wondrously in his prayerfulness. As he comes before God with firm and irresistible faith, he seems able to lay hold of God in such a way as to secure the well-being of those for whom he prays.

Now, it is one of the remarkable features of present-day missionary life that God can be rejoiced in as the Answerer of prayer. Perhaps above all other men, Dr Pierson has shown the working of God's providence in the opening of vast and effectual doors for mission work. It is for us, who have learned from our fathers in England how cries were incessantly raised in their days to open such doors, to realise what a prayer-hearing God we serve. It has been remarkable in the history of some recent missions to China that the minds of God's people have been definitely directed to put God to the proof in humble yet all-conquering faith, and they have not prayed in vain. On

the minds of others it is impressed that there should be heart-searching appeal for consecration and personal service, while others again are bowed in heart under the thought that if only there can be brought about a widespread spirit of prayerfulness among God's people everywhere, this would be the beginning of world-wide blessing. It is common, when there are appeals for men or means, for objections to be raised on the line of impossibility. But no one can say that it is not open to them to pray. An able minister of the Gospel has recently stated how his whole nature has been moved by the working of the Spirit of God in an illiterate youth, whose earnestness of piety, prevailing spirit of prayer, and humble trustfulness in God have made him more than a match for a sceptical youth greatly his superior in all earthly things. Through such a lad additions to the Church have been numerous. Now it is impossible to deny that, if we are willing, God could work through any of us to extend His kingdom at home and abroad. Much as some are led astray by the sophistries of philosophy, yet it will be found hard to deny that prayer offered in this country may not prevail to bring down limitless blessings on the heathen field. To many it seems difficult to sympathise with foreign Christians, except as they are seen through the experiences of missionaries who are our fellow-countrymen. Yet an appeal is hereby made to all prayerful readers of the above sketches to join in asking that God may be pleased to use the information thus circulated to bring us into touch with our dear brethren and sisters who are raised up from among the Chinese, fitted for all Christian service. It might have been possible to have related their story more glowingly, in more scriptural language, or phrases of theology; but the effort has been rather to under than over-state the transformations which are taking place, and the reasons which exist for invigorating courage. In the presence of God, however, there need be no limit to our confidence. Our souls, often oppressed by personal or relative trouble, may find absolute relief in Him, who can do for us "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." It is not to be forgotten that such illus-

trations of the power of Christ are given in connection with one of the older Missionary Societies. It seems sometimes as though a strange notion prevailed that a Society must become effete because it becomes old. It has, however, been the experience of the writer that the most thoughtful men met with in Britain, realising the thoroughness of the work being accomplished, have found themselves moved with more decided hope. One thing is absolutely sure, that the more entire our consecration and service, the deeper and more soul-filling will be our joy in God's Kingdom. "Blessed are they that THIRST FOR SOULS, for they shall be satisfied."

More than the preaching of a hundred missionaries, more than a gift of £10,000 would be the good done if the Christian conscience of Britain rose in irresistible might against the opium-traffic. It is believed that the Emperor of China would move to suppress the native growth if Britain would check the trade from India. Anyhow, a Christian country is called upon most earnestly to do right at all costs. Christian Chinamen are to be found amongst the native churches, who for the service of Christ have sacrificed many an earthly prospect. Such examples may stimulate us to do well, even though we suffer for it. It becomes all sincere followers of Christ to rouse themselves to enlightenment, conviction, and moral courage, so that an irresistible public opinion on behalf of national righteousness may at once be created, and compassion for mankind be sincerely displayed.

CHAPTER XIII.

An Address from Chinese Christians to their Friends in the West through their Representative.*

"Fathers and brethren,—

" PRIMARY and far-reaching virtue with us is filial piety, and thus our hearts warm with reverent affection toward you as having begotten us in the Gospel. We are most deeply concerned to improve the relationship which is formed between us and you, and to extend the blessings of Christianity which you have given to us. We know that parents are more willing to interest themselves in their children, when they see that these, in every way possible, are bent on making their own way in life. We beg to explain how we are not behind any in this characteristic. Although the introduction of Christianity by you into our country is of recent date, yet in self-help we have rapidly advanced from childhood to adult age, and can show proof of a spirit of sacrifice, worthy of you who at great cost have done us good.

"There are amongst us men who have given up very much for the service of the Saviour. One who has recently gone to his rest, a native of Amoy, spent his money and life in doing

* The author has been requested and authorised to represent a Union of Chinese Churches to their friends in the West. The verbal form of expressing their sentiments has been left to him. From an experience of many years in making their life his own, he is satisfied that the embodiment of their views here given is such as they desire.

good. He advanced ten thousand dollars for an Anglo-Chinese College at Foochow; he provided half the money for a boarding middle school at Amoy; his hand was ever open for the needy, both churches and ministers; he traversed sea and land in pushing on the conquests of the Cross, at the same time that he carried on his lawful trading; and he started a Christian inn at Hong-Kong. He likewise bore noble witness for God by risking his business in keeping the Sabbath, by establishing a system of domestic instruction in the new faith, and by talking straightly and strongly to all whom he met in business, in schools, and in hospitals. His wife, Mrs Ahok, known to many of you, has come to Britain and widely pleaded the cause of her Chinese sisters.

"Your hearts would not fail to be moved if you knew how one of our number gave up an opportunity of making money in foreign trade in order to serve Christ, and has willingly borne consequent privation through life; how another gave up an attractive opening in medicine, feeling that his chief calling was to preach the Gospel; how another refused honour and pay as a lawyer that he might set forth the law of God; and how another worked himself into an early grave by his unsparing efforts both in evangelism and the founding of churches. All the converts are trained to bear their own expenses, and spread the Gospel at their own charges. Thus thousands of dollars a year are raised where formerly all our expenses were given to us.

"We can hardly expect your deepest regard, except as we approve ourselves to your highest judgment. Let us then explain further proofs of our efforts.

"You are aware that South-Eastern China, our home, is remarkable for the energy of its people. From these parts men emigrate by thousands, through Amoy, which means 'The Lower Door.' In these parts of China we have terrible clan fights. Our people are largely divided into the 'weak' and the 'strong,' so that boundless vigour is called out in a variety of struggles. The force of our countrymen is too often shown in

evil, as in piracy, village wars, kidnapping, smuggling, and other forms of daring lawlessness. It is with no small satisfaction that we see how all this native force can be subdued by the power of the Truth, so that during seasons of special prayer and spiritual quickening we see how volcanic hatreds are checked, village wars prevented, social evils overcome, and secular strifes either avoided or patiently borne by Christians.

"We would, however, ask particular attention to the great fact that in heathen China there is now in actual existence a Christian Church. Other events in our country, political, commercial, educational, social, are secondary to this. Not only are individual converts rejoicing in a new life and power against evil, but we are banded together in a union, which is strength. It is a feature of our national life that we tend to coherence. Thus kingdoms once separated over the eighteen provinces have been drawn together into one Chinese Empire. There is massive strength in the life of our two thousand walled cities. Great business guilds guard each other's interests. The literary classes co-operate efficiently, while the power of rulers, taking root in our family life, rears itself with ever-increasing energy through village elders and chiefs, and rises through every grade of mandarins. We therefore appreciate cohesion in Christian Churches. Our combinations have already secured great results. It is a new thing in our country to see Christian edifices rising in towns and villages, to have the Sabbath established, to have the Scriptures translated both in classical and vernacular; to have regular Christian services for worship, instruction, and fellowship. The Christian movement among us is so far advanced that we now maintain Christian ordinances for ourselves, and taking such responsibility, we also assume authority to choose our own ministers. In some cases we have begun to send forth evangelists. We do not consider any station or church to be complete without a school; and the education of girls is coming to be regarded as of equal importance with that of boys.

"Our movements for women, having begun in saving the

lives of infant girls, go on to such reform as improve the conditions of our sisters in their individual and family life, and *tend to* make them a power, as wives, mothers, and teachers, as well as deaconesses, preachers and doctors. Our desire is in every department of Christian service to develop the missionary spirit by which we have been called into existence. We are satisfied that if the present humble, prayerful, and effective methods are faithfully carried on, ever increasing results will follow. In the meetings of our Union it is found, as in fact in our local Christian Societies, that we have an engine of power in our principle of co-operation. We are free to adapt ourselves to the needs of our circumstances, and to develop a Church life which may prove more and more mighty against every form of moral, mental, and physical evil. In these meetings of our Union we are accustomed to give heed to all questions of reform, as well as to all the life and work of the churches. Prevention of village wars, illicit brotherhoods, and foot-crushing, healthy marriage customs, checks on reckless divorce, a conscience on domestic slavery and polygamy, the turning of the heart of parents to children,—all such questions are welcomed in our deliberative assemblies, and public opinion, both good and useful, is created. It is help in being and doing good that we greatly need. We can perceive truth if it means better life and better conduct; where Christians show these our prosperity is secured. Here and there a station has been wrecked by even a solitary act of misconduct in a native minister, showing the vast importance of character amongst the Chinese.

"In general, we feel persuaded that you will be most pleased that our gratitude to you be shown by our reproducing extensively the Christianity you have given to us, thus showing our life by our growth, and letting the highest life take the lead in all the transformations taking place. In this way we have found it possible to open up a new inland district, which was not reached by ordinary methods of development because of its isolation. A crusade was arranged, by which, in conjunction

with one of your missionaries, a number of our earnest men have been seeking to bring a whole country-side under earnest, settled evangelistic effort. Several Christian communities are the result, and many forms of beneficent effort. We could not have done this without help from you, because our means are limited, and our men need to be trained and led. There is, however, no need to doubt that all these forms of progress we have briefly alluded to may be indefinitely extended if you in the West will be pleased to put value on native agency equally with the work of your missionaries; and if you will thus call out, lead forward, and watch over native labourers, until, by their own growth and the increased power of the Churches, a position of independence is reached. *The chief strength of missionaries may well be spent on bands of local preachers, teachers, and volunteer evangelists, as well as by the more elaborate work of formally educating and equipping Chinamen, who, by grace, gifts, and usefulness, may be able to undertake all forms of responsibility, even as the foreign missionaries. In this way the work of foreign missionaries may be multiplied a hundred-fold,* while the Gospel will be more readily understood and appreciated from the lips and lives of *Chinese.* There are now some thirty or forty thousand native Christians. How strong a number of apostles should be called out from all this number! It has been said, 'The Chinese Apostle has not yet arisen.' It may be that many are in waiting till those who lead the van sufficiently perceive the importance of seeking them out. One of your papers has contained this statement, 'Missionary Societies must always occupy the attention of the Churches with fresh, aggressive, evangelistic schemes. Unaggressive Societies, that show little faith in God or the people, are neither honoured by God, nor fully trusted and faithfully served by the people. If we could *do more* in our Christian enterprise, we should be supported better.' The aggressiveness here called for is the very principle of our existence. And as you of the London Missionary Society took the lead in first preaching the Gospel, we say to you, 'Let no man take your crown.'

"It is often supposed that we Chinese are destitute of feeling. Now, seeing the missionary spirit is founded in tender love for mankind shown by Him who wept in view of the woes coming on Jerusalem—whom we, equally with you, have learned to love above all others; seeing that, without a possibility of tender response to the love thus shown, the missionary spirit cannot work, we would therefore take special pains to explain ourselves on this matter. We are trained to *conceal* our feelings, and it is often not safe to show them. But do not let our friends imagine that we fail to return their affection for us. The spring-life of our Saviour breaks forth at first in small buddings, but our life enlarges; and the more we make progress in the blessedness of the better life, the more we feel gratitude, and it may be relied upon that we never forget a kindness. In our church life is seen the sorrow of those who have failed of their ideal; the weeping of those who have had to be rebuked for wrong-doing; keen remorse over failure, conscientious distress over moral delinquency, earnest cries to God, 'We believe, help our unbelief.' When insensibility sometimes settles down on any of our people, it is because our life is crushed by intolerable woes. Some of these can hardly be known except to those who understand us, *e.g.*, oppressions, immoralities, and poverty, occasioned by terrible waste in idolatry and superstition, along with the want of practical wisdom as to the laws of health. Deplorable forms of disease are brought on, for which opium is regarded as the best cure. It seems as though the most energetic peoples of the world are under greatest temptation to stimulants. There is in our people a great *taste* for this drug, just as in yours for strong drink, and thus the enormous use fostered by your traders. Some of your friends have shown us favour in trying to limit the trade, that our people might be saved from too great temptation, as is the custom in your country. We thank you most deeply, and pray that this great woe from which we suffer may be remembered by you. Indeed, we suffer in myriads of individuals and families! Our churches are in consternation as to the salvation of opium-smokers. Pity us,

and aid us in every way possible. In view of our sufferings from many and terrible evils, we are truly in danger of losing heart, and becoming hardened and hopeless in our great griefs. Often our people have recourse to lynch law against offenders; thus an eye or both eyes are torn out, or lime is rubbed in to destroy the sight of a gross offender; again an ear or both ears are cut off; and even the heads of evil-doers in certain cases. Human life is not valued amongst us as amongst you. We could give harrowing proofs of this statement. But you might turn from us in alarm and disgust. We only state these things to show how many causes are at work to harden the nature. Materialism, magisterial cruelty, peculiar forms of retaliation, avarice, revenge, dread of devils, fatalism, a want of comfort in trouble, and a want of hope after death, all have their hardening effect. Our lives have distresses of which you know nothing. When hope comes, it touches our prosaic life with light and love, and the result is a warming and melting, as if the breath of spring succeeded the cold of winter. Our heart is profoundly influenced by reading the *Pilgrim's Progress;* and when some of our number have come to the end of earth's troubles, they have had visions of angels, and rejoiced in the same glory as is shown at the end of that wondrous dream. It is suited to our condition to remember Him, who, by His agony and bloody sweat, His cross and passion, His precious death and burial, suffered for men; and prevailed in His glorious resurrection and ascension to the throne of power.

You must not imagine, honoured fathers, that our lot as Christians in a country like China is an easy one. We are often charged by our fellow-countrymen with pro-foreign proclivities. The universality of the love of God is not easily known amongst our people. Political influences are against us. We do not ask for any *undue* interference on our behalf. This would defeat its own purpose. We are not unprepared to suffer for Christ's sake so far as our strength will permit; but our strength is small, our adversaries are strong and mighty. Conservatism is the law of our land. We suffer the more

according as a man's position in life is good and his associations widespread. It is hard to be expatriated. To whom can we turn if driven from house and home? Many have joyfully suffered expulsion from village and property. A Chinaman finds such suffering peculiarly trying. We have ranked ourselves on the side of God, we are known as God-worshippers; we see that as Christianity grows, and when the multitudes touched by it find courage to confess themselves, there will be a great commotion. It will be imagined that we are not loyal to our fatherland. Designing men will seek to make capital out of us on a larger scale than ever before, and there will come on us many kinds of persecution. Surely the voice of Western Christendom will not be silent before God and man, in case Chinese Christians become as sheep for the slaughter.

"We recognise the valuable work you have done for us and our country through your Missionaries. Some of them have fallen at their work, and our hearts follow them with a wondrous reverence. Inasmuch as any of them can reveal a life superior to that of human passions, we respond, and give them our confidence so fully as to follow them wherever they lead. We do not undervalue the kind of work already done by you through your messengers. It is no small matter in a country like ours that Christian workers have learned how to proceed. We have proved that general Evangelism must be equalled by settled stations, in which every form of usefulness is carried on, and the personality of the worker can tell on all those whose good he seeks. Still, we trust you will be willing for us to point out that greater good than ever might be done by you, if only your high-class men—men especially who hold Government positions—would witness for God. We know how sometimes they are applied to for advice in times of distress, arising from such physical and moral causes as obtain in China, and we know that precious opportunities not given to others have been lost, whereas a very simple word, pointing out mental and physical aid to be obtained in Christianity, might have led

to the salvation, not only of a stricken family, but of a wide district ruled over by him who was stricken. We would say to you, our honoured fathers, be pleased to remember that rule in our country is paternal. We are slow to develop such an extent of individuality as exists amongst you. Therefore it is natural to us to look to you the more seriously for all the support you can render to the progress of truth in China. If you, on your part, will provide men and means equal to the need of giving the Gospel to those who are yet neglected, we will not spare ourselves, as we have shown in our past history. We see progress to be the law of Christ and His apostles. We cannot live without it. We are blessed in it. We must develop it in all forms.

"We cannot close without giving vent to our feelings as to the greatness of the blessings you have bestowed on us. A new value now attaches to human life. Many of our fellow-countrymen who had no object to live for, are now reformed, made useful members of society, and even teachers of others. A new class of men is rising up amongst us, intelligent, trained energetic teachers, preachers, pastors, and reformers of public morals. We see the promise of new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Confucianism, exalted though some of its tenets be, gives no hope for sinners. Christianity reveals the loving Father, feeling for and saving His prodigal child. Amongst Christians a new power of deliverance from sin is set forth, and so effective is this power that in many cases the worst evils of Chinese life have been affected by it. For the bitterest distresses of our native life no comfort is found in any Chinese system of thought or religion; but Christianity is not without some light and help for every need. We see amongst Christians how our natural tendency to sociability and good fellowship can be touched, sublimated, enlarged, and, what is better than all, made reliable. In our country vast movements of a beneficent kind are prevented through the want of enlightenment and mutual good faith. These are found in Christians, and though at present only in a limited degree, yet our thought-

ful men perceive possibilities of progress in the quality and numbers of converts which fill us with marvellous expectancy. *We are prepared for even* MIRACULOUS *interpositions.*

"Fathers and brethren, we may not be permitted this side the grave to see your faces; for this we must wait till we meet in the Great Home; yet, with all the strength of the young, new life you have called out in our old country, we make our request to you to utilise the opportunities given you for helping all our countrymen at large to share the blessings you have given to us. We are informed that you are expecting in coming years to be more filled with the Spirit than ever. We too have sedulously and particularly sought the same grace of God. May we be permitted to rejoice together evermore over answers to such prayers. Then may it be proved possible that the exodus from Egypt to the promised land—*the beneficient changes* enjoyed by us as individuals and families—may be also enjoyed by our NATION; and as *we* progress, may the favour of Heaven be the more shared by *you*, our benefactors. This is the desire of,

"Yours faithfully,

"CHRISTIANS IN CHINA."

APPENDIX.

NOTES ON MRS AHOK'S VISIT TO ENGLAND.

The visit to England of Mrs Ahok, referred to on page 25, was marked by striking events, which ought not to be unknown. A few of them are here added, and it is hoped that at some future time the whole will be duly recorded.

To some it might seem that the visit was dictated, in part at least, by motives of curiosity, not unnatural to Chinese who had been brought into relations with Europeans and Americans, as was the case with Mr and Mrs Ahok. It is, however, absolutely clear that such ordinary motives had no play. Mrs Ahok steadily refused to amuse herself by going to the sights of England, or even to sea-side resorts, for pleasure. *She had come on a mission, and to this she bent the full force of her vigorous nature, in seeking to enkindle zeal on behalf of her sisters in China.* To her, after passing through difficulties which threatened to be insuperable in the way of understanding Christianity, there had come, as she expressed it, not the glimmerings of light only, but the noonday full splendour. Her soul was at liberty; she dwelt on high; and in the new joy and strength, in the power of the Holy Ghost, she was determined to spare no pains to make full proof of her ministry to England. Another proof of the inspiration which moved her is given in this fact, that the sight of Christians, in their grandeur and luxury, so far from being to her a fascination, seems to have had the opposite effect, as it was with Mrs Catherine Booth. In fact, the effect on her mind became so depressing that it was felt an undue strain was being put on her faith.

We come, then, to the solemn but inspiriting conclusion that there has appeared on our shores in this Chinese lady a veritable messenger of God, moved by those deeper considerations of the leadings of the Holy Spirit, which mark the more

effective and valuable forms of the better life amongst us, and without which there seems no outlook for any individual, Church, or Society. If our hearts are indeed going forth in consecration and prayer, it is well for us to glance at the proofs of the power of this life, as seen in Mrs Ahok and her work.

When our sister was leaving China, she was beset by friends, who insisted against such a journey, and so many risks, and forsaking the associations of her home, and going on to scenes and circumstances peculiarly trying to a Chinese woman. Her husband and herself calmly yet decidedly set aside all such insistance, stating they were satisfied that THEY WERE DOING GOD'S WILL.

At Hong-Kong there was a repetition of the opposition, so great that the lady in charge of Mrs Ahok was for a while separated from her, while the urgent friends pleaded their side of the question. It seemed doubtful how the affair would end; but, when consulted, Mrs Ahok was still calm and strong in her original persuasion. She could say, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear," etc.

On board the steamer she shrank, with her Chinese womanliness, from going to the common table for both sexes, to eat in mixed company. Her companion explained to her, in firm though gentle words, that her objections had no force except in Chinese etiquette; that, as a matter of fact, there would be nothing improper to a Christian in such a course. She said, "Give me time to pray, to see if the Lord takes away my shrinking." This came about, and she was never afterward concerned any further on the matter.

When she arrived in this country there was an important meeting, in which gentlemen were present. Mrs Ahok said, "I am going to speak." It was objected, "There are gentlemen present, and you can't." But she said, "You told me that in Christ there is neither male nor female. I must speak." She did so, giving her message as she felt prompted.

A question arose as to where she should be located. *Her* mind was already under guidance. She had known a sister of Mrs Stewart (the lady who eventually conducted her through Britain and interpreted) and her decided word was, "To that sister let me go." Many things were remarkable. Her acquaintance with the sister was but slight, and she knew little of her whereabouts, except that it was near London, but she had been drawn to this lady—Mrs Watson, Woodford—and it was on her mind that her location was thus fixed. So it turned out.

As soon as her abode was entered on, she wished to get to work. "Me have meeting." Her knowledge of English was very small. No interpreter was present. Mrs Watson was naturally concerned as to how any meeting could be successfully carried through. She refused a meeting, but the refusal could not be received by Mrs Ahok. Objections were raised as to engagements. The answer was a further inquiry "Is to-morrow engaged, next day, next," and so on till an opportunity was settled. Mrs Watson felt it might be of God, and so allowed the meeting, hardly knowing how it was to be conducted. It was not without success. Mrs Ahok said all she could. She sang hymns; and her history was given by the hostess.

It was understood by Mrs Ahok that there was a large hall at Stratford. She made application there. It was granted. Thither went the courageous Chinawoman to give her testimony. Her address in broken English was founded on two texts. The first concerning Jesus seeing the multitudes as sheep without a shepherd; the second, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also," etc. In her powerful though strange way she explained that she was going to speak of "seep" (sheep), "Seep begin, seep end." The passages easily lend themselves to treatment such as the writer heard her give at Mildmay about the distressing needs of Chinese women.

One day her guide and interpreter explained to her that she had spoken at too great length. It would be well to be shorter. Her reply was, "I only speak what is given me; if you would have me speak less, ask the Lord to give me less." To her mind, Christians might deal with the Master direct, even when they wished to influence the servant.

One more item. It seems that in one case, at least, her zeal has led to the consecretion of a worker. It happened that she heard of a lady who was not prepared to allow her daughter to go to foreign mission service. She asked to see the lady. Her English was still very limited, but there was given to her this message "*The time is short.*" With deliberate and impressive emphasis she repeated this passage till the lady was influenced and her objections gave way. These plain statements point to miracles of working. May we not ask God, if it be His will, to bring His servant back again to continue the work, even on an improved system, such as that of giving information referred to in chapter II. *To Him be glory.*

MISS DR. KIN.

What opening in life was there for this child? Must all girls be devoted to rearing a family and cooking rice? Such was the problem that presented itself to an honoured missionary, as he looked on a little Chinese maiden.

The missionary came from that great land of enterprise, the United States, and brought a versatile mind to the many problems of Chinese life. Both he and his wife were not only kind, but clever; they were well aware of the attractions of the medical art in a country like China, where the people, in virtue of their needs and eagerness for treatment, are such excellent patients; and a small amount of money spent on medical relief can be made to go so great a way. Thus, when this worthy American is conning over the possibilities of usefulness for this little maiden, a long vista opens before him. He is a medical man. He has seen the benefits of professional skill both at home and abroad. In China he sees that *women's work must include medical service amongst its chief departments.* The Chinese father, a good Christian worker, deserves it; the girl seems equal to it; why should not this missionary, among the other noble deeds of his long career, "adopt" the little one, and take her to enjoy the grand opportunities of Western training, so that she may in time return to do good service amongst her fellow-countrywomen? His plan takes shape; and thus a life in which there have been blended cures of healing, diplomacy, consular negotiations, legal acumen, and scholarship, devotes itself tenderly to a new charge in the spirit of Him who taught, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me."

Heaven's smile illumines the career of this first of China's daughters who has come to the great West for medical instruction. In these stirring times, and amidst the momentous changes of to-day, will Chinese women pay for medical training? There is small encouragement to try the experiment, if we look at the skill of the country on its own lines. Men who practise medicine are proverbially said to *i-si lang*, "to cure to death." If this be true of practitioners who have had

some instruction, how much more reason to despair of women, whose education has been neglected in all departments. But our little friend finds herself in a happy atmosphere. She has come to the West, the land of the free. She is well received; she has equal advantages with the American girls, her fellow-students. Her knowledge of English is proficient. She studies faithfully and systematically; her mind awakens as by electric touch. She finds it true that in America, if any one has anything in him, it will be brought out. To the States belongs the honour of having gained a powerful hold on the Japanese mind by an almost new process—showing kindness to men, who were taken up and cared for, educated, and even adopted by prominent citizens, and sent back to the Japanese fatherland to become leading spirits in the uplifting of their country. There are in the States, as there are in Britain, men who take broad views of our race, who study the oneness of the human family everywhere, and welcome every influence for its amelioration and uplifting.

Kindness, both in public and in private, was the breath of life to Miss Kin. She not only made progress in her studies; but, what is more, won affection from her foreign fellow-students. In the ways that girls know how to use, these girl undergraduates interested themselves in each other's welfare. Their health had stood the strain of study. Their minds had been developed and informed. They were preparing for a future career of usefulness. But who shall stand highest in the honours of their profession? The examination is over, and anxiously they wait to know the results. Guesses are hazarded; who can tell? The postman comes; and it is with joy that the unselfish American examinees congratulate their sister from the Middle Kingdom on having attained to highest merit. The first lady medical student from China, she has obtained the first degree.

A new problem now presents itself. Whither shall she return to practise the healing art she has acquired? Japan is suggested. But, with the earnest patriotism of her people, she desires to serve them. To China she must return. So be it. The earnest soul, more powerful in mind than body, is conducted to Amoy by her faithful friends. Her study of the language—for it is strange to her—is carried on with intensity. She is bent on doing good, though in ways which are, in *her* judgment,

the most successful. She inclines rather to *quality* of work than to show of numbers.

Her hospital is started; her adopted father and mother aid in the many weighty decisions which must be made. Some progress is secured, but ordinary hospital work has to submit to some new developments.

Owing to the honorary degree of civil authority, which the Chinese Government had bestowed on him, the adopted father is known in high places. Way is thus made for the daughter.

Doors, never before open to Christian influence, now unfold to admit the female healer. A mandarin has his feelings. If his wife and daughter can be saved in time of perilous sickness, it will be to his advantage, nay, will gratify his natural affection. Welcome, then, the lady doctor! and while she rests awhile from her assiduous care of the sick, let there be social intercourse between herself and her patients by which curiosity can, at least, be allayed; and, as the doctor becomes the friend, important information may be gained. Near by—perhaps within earshot—is the great man himself. "This foreigner," he argues to himself, "is not a teacher of religion, still less is she—a gentle woman—likely to be a political spy or agent. Her accents fall gently; indeed, she speaks but little; she is one of ourselves. A woman, yet by her usefulness, worthy of attention. Perhaps we may safely let her tell something of the history of spiritual experiences in the people amongst whom she has lived; and even of that extraordinary faith, which cannot indeed be equal to the truths taught by our Confucius, and yet is strangely influential. For, while the gods of our land are often feeble, this God of the West at least does something for His own."

And so, in circles unreached otherwise, this gentle practitioner makes her way. Inoffensive, practical, Christlike, she is received where others seek access in vain. Surely her case proves what might be expected if such agencies could be multiplied by native ladies being trained either in China or in the West. But the most encouraging feature of the case has yet to come. Calculating and wealthy fellow-countrymen are looking on. What if they start a hospital, and arrange for the healer to visit their families? They may at once be philanthropic and economical. Why should not such a plan be accomplished?

There will have to be mutual concessions, as, for instance,

about the extent to which Christianity shall be authoritatively introduced, and the amount of effort of different kinds which shall be undertaken. The general control and management is a difficulty. These questions of detail, however, will right themselves in time, if there be only the exercise of the *suaviter in modo* as well as the *fortiter in re.*

The main point is that there is wonderful scope for a self-supporting medical institution furnishing help where needs indeed are sore.

Right glad may any foreign missionaries be to train, start, and help the Chinese lady doctors. Not only will they from the first relieve the woeful sufferings of uncared-for women and children, but the good news which has made our country what it is, and by which so many hearts in Christendom "live, move, and have their being," will unostentatiously be spread amongst "those of reputation." "All things to all men" was a motto of one who has done more than many in detailed effort, as well as world-wide sympathy. And, after all, Paul only exemplified the spirit of Him who is destined to touch our human life on every side, till all the helpless find in Him their Helper.

What though, in Dr Kin's case, the promise of the good tarries in fulfilment? The fact that Japan, the land at first pressed on her attention, is now the scene of her labours (for Miss Dr Kin's labours have been transferred to that country) does not destroy the fair, God-wrought vision. Her absence from China, and the fact that the vision is unfulfilled, make the call for such lady medical workers only more imperative.

THE END.

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